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FIVE DISCOURSES  
ON -  
THE PERSONAL OFFICE OF CHRIST,  
AND OF THE HOLY GHOST;  
ON  
THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY;  
ON FAITH;  
AND  
ON REGENERATION

PREACHED IN THE PARISH CHURCH OF BERWICK UPON TWEED,  
AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF HIS THURSDAY LECTURES,

BY THE REVEREND  
WILLIAM PROCTER, JUNIOR, M. A.  
FELLOW OF CATHARINE HALL, CAMBRIDGE,  
AND LECTURER OF BERWICK.

WITH  
AN APPENDIX.

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1824



TO THE  
MASTER, WARDENS, COURT OF ASSISTANTS,  
AND  
GENERAL COURT  
OF THE  
WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF MERCERS,  
LONDON.

GENTLEMEN,

WHEN I call to mind how totally unknown I was to every individual amongst you at the time of my first appearance as a Candidate for the Lecture-ship of Berwick, I am at a loss which to admire most, my own boldness in venturing to come forward under such circumstances, or your disinterested Patronage in appointing me to the office. The only account I can give of my boldness is, that I had passed the thirtieth year of my age, without seeing any defined prospect of obtaining a permanent provision from the revenues of the Church, to the service of which I felt obliged in conscience to devote, undivided, the best exertions of the rest of my life.

The portion of those revenues which you have conferred upon me, will enable me to pursue the straight-forward path of duty, without fear of penury, as I pray God I may have grace to do, without weariness, and without ostentation. It is, therefore, with feelings of the sincerest Gratitude and Respect that I dedicate to you the following Discourses, which circumstances, mentioned in the Appendix, have induced me to publish.

I am,

GENTLEMEN,

Your most obliged

and faithful Servant,

WILLIAM PROCTER, Jun.

*Berwick, 15th December, 1824.*

# DISCOURSE I.

ON THE PERSONAL NATURE OF JESUS CHRIST.

Preached on ASCENSION-DAY, 27th May, 1824.

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PHILIPPIANS, II. 5—11.

*“ Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus : Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God ; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men ; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore, God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name ; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth ; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*

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In these words we have a perfect outline of the history of Christ our Saviour, from “ the beginning, when He was with God and was God ;”<sup>1</sup> to the great consummation, when “ that same Jesus,” now both God and Man, “ who,” as on this day,

<sup>1</sup> John, i. 1.

" was taken up into heaven, shall so come, in like manner as the holy Apostles saw him go into heaven,"<sup>2</sup> viz. when he shall come " with the clouds of heaven ;"<sup>3</sup> when " the judgment shall be set, and the books opened, and all people, and nations, and languages, shall serve the Son of Man."<sup>4</sup> For " He must reign" as *Messiah*, as the *anointed* Prophet, Priest, and King, till he hath completed the purpose for which he vouchsafed to assume that peculiar character; " till he hath put all enemies under his feet,"<sup>5</sup> and till " every tongue," as well of his abased foes, as of his exalted subjects, " shall confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

To endeavour to fill up from Scripture this ample outline; by producing to view the several circumstances of the History of Man's Redemption, which, in its full extent, comprehends the whole of revealed religion; and so producing them, as not to destroy their native force and efficacy, " for the use of edifying;"—such, my brethren, are the arduous duties of the office upon which I this day enter, not without a deep sense of awful responsibility, and a humble consciousness of my own unworthiness and

<sup>2</sup> Acts i. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Dan. vii. 13.

<sup>4</sup> Ib. 10, 14.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 25.

insufficiency. But, praised be God, the fruit of our labours does not depend upon our own exertions *alone*. Our blessed Lord, before his ascension, thus encouraged the chosen “witnesses and ministers of the Word”—“All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you : And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”<sup>6</sup> This promise of being present with them, in teaching all nations, *even to the end of the world*, cannot be confined to the “eye-witnesses” to whom it was immediately addressed, but must extend to the whole succession of Christ’s teachers, then represented by the Apostles ; that is, to all those who, by an authority derived from the Apostles, are commissioned to preach the Gospel in any place, at any period of the world. Encouraged, therefore, by the promise of Divine support, I do not faint under the burden imposed upon me ; but enter on the duties of this sacred office with a well-founded confidence, that He, who has given me grace at their com-

<sup>6</sup> Matt. xxviii. 18—20.

mencement to rely on His promised aid, will preserve me in their progress from all serious error, and enable me to be an instrument of good to some before the close of my ministerial labours in this place.

For the improvement of the present occasion, I implore the especial guidance of the Spirit of Truth, and bespeak your most serious attention to the subject, while I endeavour briefly to set before you the mysterious, but vitally important doctrines of Holy Scripture, relating to the *personal nature of our Redeemer*, in the three different states in which he is presented to us in the Text, viz.—

I. In his eternal state of supreme Power and Glory, “ being in the form of God,” and “ equal with God.”

II. In his state of voluntary Humiliation, when “ he took upon himself the form of a servant; and being found in fashion as a man, humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

III. In his state of Exaltation, the consequence and reward of that humiliation. “ Wherefore God

also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name ; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth.”

It is impossible to give a true, however inadequate, representation of the Messiah in this three-fold state, without suggesting many powerful persuasives to lead a Godly and a Christian life ; but the application I have most in view at present, is that of St. Paul in the context ; viz. to recommend, by the example of Christ Jesus, the true Christian temper of *humility*.—“ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.”—“ Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory, but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves.”<sup>7</sup>

First, then, we are led by our Text to consider Christ as *perfect God, co-equal and co-eternal* with the Father. “ Being in the form of God, he thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” Whence the necessary inference is, that he was God; for it would be the most impious and audacious robbery for any one else to pretend to be equal with God. The Soci-

<sup>7</sup> Philipp. ii. 3.

nians, of course, deny this inference, and sometimes propose different translations ; but it is as unnecessary, as it would be unedifying, to expose the fallacy of their arguments, or the falsehood of their versions. (A) The doctrine of Christ's Divinity is so interwoven with the whole texture of revelation, that it surpasses the power of the most audacious mis-translation to disguise, and of the most ingenuous sophistry to explain away, all the passages by which it may be proved. When a person of plain common sense reads, for example, that Jesus not only accepted the title, " my Lord and my God,"<sup>8</sup> which was addressed to him by St. Thomas ; but pronounced a blessing upon all who should have the same belief, without having seen the same proofs of his Divinity : When he reads that " the Word (who "was made flesh and dwelt among us") was in the beginning with God, and was God;"<sup>9</sup> or that " God was manifest in the flesh :"<sup>10</sup> When, I say, an unbiassed person of plain common sense reads such passages as these, (and many such must be found in every book that has the most remote pretensions to be called a translation of the Scriptures,) it surpasses the power of the most refining

(A) Capitals refer to Notes in the Appendix.

<sup>8</sup> John, xx. 28. <sup>9</sup> John, i. 1 and 14. <sup>10</sup> 1 Tim. iii. 16.

sophistry to persuade him that they do not assert the Divinity of Christ. If, therefore, the word of God be true, Christ is God. And St. Paul, who so clearly maintains that doctrine in other places, could not speak of his “being in the form of God, and thinking it no robbery to be equal with God,” without meaning what the words most obviously imply, viz. that *he was God*.

But now comes the most wonderful part of the “great mystery of godliness. *God was manifest in the flesh.*”<sup>2</sup> The Almighty Word, very and eternal God, took man’s nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin, and thus became *perfect man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting*. He who was God could not cease to be God; and therefore, by a union which it would be vain for any one to attempt to comprehend, the divine and human natures were united in his one person; and so united, that each nature was in itself complete and entire, without, in the slightest degree, impairing the completeness or perfection of the other, with which it was personally identified.

The passages of Scripture already quoted will serve, in connexion with the words of our Text, to

<sup>2</sup> 1 Tim. iii. 16.

prove the truth of this doctrine also; which belongs, you will observe, to the second head of our division. “The Word was God.” “The Word was made Flesh.” “God was manifested in the Flesh.” And it is worthy of remark, that the tangible proof of his *perfect manhood* was the very thing which drew from St. Thomas the unqualified acknowledgment of his *perfect Godhead*. Without, therefore, pretending to comprehend the manner how, we cannot believe the Scriptures, without believing that “In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead *bodily*.<sup>3</sup>

And not only was God united in the person of Jesus Christ, to the mortal body; but also, which seems still more mysterious, to the *rational soul* of man. To render him a true representative of the whole human race, it was necessary (B) that his manhood should be precisely the same as ours, *naturally* exempted from none of its natural feelings or natural infirmities. He therefore took our *entire nature* in the womb of the blessed Virgin, and came into the world with all the *mental* as well as *bodily* imbecility of a human infant. “Jesus increased in *wisdom*,” as well as “stature;”<sup>4</sup> and therefore

<sup>3</sup> Col. ii. 9.      <sup>4</sup> Luke, ii. 52. See also Pearson on the Creed, Art. iii. vol. I. p. 256.

must have had (distinct from the Divine, whose wisdom is infinite, and yet united in the same person,) a *human soul*, the seat of a finite understanding. The same was also the seat of his directed Will, distinct from the Will of his Father.—“Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me ; nevertheless, not my Will, but thine be done.”<sup>5</sup> In this impassioned prayer, we discover the human Soul of Jesus, not only in a Will distinct from the Divine, but also in the prevalence of human feelings and affections ; which he often experienced, but on no occasion so forcibly as on that, when his “*Soul* was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.”<sup>6</sup> This exceeding sorrowfulness unquestionably bespeaks a human soul. And this it was which, when he actually arrived at the point of death, he recommended to the Father, saying, “Father, into thy hands I commend my *spirit* ; and having thus said, he gave up the *ghost*.”<sup>7</sup>

The Man Jesus Christ had therefore a soul and a body, naturally differing in nothing from the soul and body of other men, and thus was *perfect Man*, “in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”<sup>8</sup> We have already twice shewn, that the same

<sup>5</sup> Luke, xxii. 42.

<sup>6</sup> Matt. xvi. 38.

<sup>7</sup> Luke, xxiii. 46.

<sup>8</sup> Heb. iv. 15.

Jesus Christ was *perfect God*; and, therefore, immutably possessed of all those adorable perfections which are essential to the very being of God. Many are the proofs of his absolute Divinity, which he vouchsafed to exhibit during his manifestation in the flesh; and the essential immutability of the Divine nature compels us to confess, that there never can have been a moment in which he did not possess all the attributes of the Deity. Yes, even when the infant Jesus was wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger,—when the Man of sorrows was buffeted, and spit upon, and nailed to the cross,—he was in complete possession of the same Almighty Power, with which he created the universe.

It is difficult here, not to anticipate our proposed arrangement, and dwell with admiring wonder on the extent of that humility and patience, which could condescend so low, and endure so much, and *abstain from the exercise* of his Almighty Power, under circumstances of such unequalled provocation. But I forbear from pursuing that topic for the present, as well as from noticing the objections which cross our carnal minds on the statement of these mysterious truths; and, in order to give a connected view of the personal nature of our Lord, as it is set forth in Scripture,

shall now pass on to the consideration of the third state in which he is presented to us in the Text, viz. his state of Exaltation and Reward.

In examining the state of humility which began at the Incarnation, and was completed by the Crucifixion of our Lord, we shewed, that he then was *perfect God, and perfect Man.* We now advance a step farther, and say, that in his state of exaltation, he still is, and ever will be, perfect God, and perfect Man—*Perfect Man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting.*

It is unnecessary to add anything to what has been already said, to shew that he still is perfect God. We have shewn, that he was God from the beginning, and that he was God during every stage of his humiliation ; much more, then, must he still continue to be God in his exaltation. In a word, God is, from everlasting to everlasting, the same ; so that he who was God, can never for an instant cease to be God, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, impassible, immortal, immutable. As God, therefore, the Messiah was equally incapable of humiliation and exaltation, of suffering and reward. But as Man, he made himself capable of both. As Man he was despised, and rejected, and acquainted with grief. As Man he was bruised,

agonised, put to death. And as *Man* he rose again from the dead.

When he appeared for the first time to his assembled disciples, after his Resurrection, “They were terrified, and affrighted, and supposed they had seen a Spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.”<sup>9</sup> Thus he convinced his disciples that he was the same Jesus whom they had known before, whose hands and whose feet had been pierced with nails, and his side with a spear. That his *body* was the same, he convinced them by shewing the hole of the spear, and the print of the nails, and making them handle him, and see that it was, as before his death, the same real body of flesh and blood. And that the same *human soul*, which had been separated from that body on the cross, was now re-united to it, he proved at this, and every subsequent interview he had with his disciples, by the same meekness and lowliness of heart, the same familiar acquaintance with their minutest circumstances, the

<sup>9</sup> Luke, xxiv. 37—39.

same feeling allowance for their infirmities, the same *humane* attention to their particular wants, and, in short, by many infallible proofs, during the forty days he was seen of them, after his passion, speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.<sup>1</sup>

Thus we see that, during these forty days, Christ, who was always the same perfect God, was also the same perfect Man he had been before his Passion. In that same nature, *with a human body and a human soul*, he ascended up into heaven, in the sight of his Apostles. In that same nature he now reigneth in glory, and will continue to reign, with the peculiar sway belonging to his mediatorial office, till he hath put all things under his feet, and finished the judgment committed to him by the Father, at the general resurrection, on his coming again. “Then cometh the end, when we shall have delivered up the kingdom”—that peculiar kingdom, the whole object of whose establishment will then have been accomplished—“to God, even the Father;” and thenceforth reign in the unity of the Godhead, without any peculiar jurisdiction, “that God may be all in all.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Acts, i. 3.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 28.

“ Seeing, then, that we have a great high-priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an High-priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities ; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”<sup>3</sup> If any one let go this “ anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast,” because he cannot comprehend the manner in which *God and Man is one Christ*, the same person must, in consistency, renounce all claim to superiority above the natural idiot, or the beasts that perish ; for I defy him to explain, or even to conceive, *how* he can be possessed of intellectual faculties, which are unknown to the idiot or the brute. We, my brethren, who know our ignorance of the nature of our own bodies, and still more of our souls, and, most of all, of the Divine Essence, will not be guilty of the presumptuous folly of passing judgment respecting their possible modes of co-existence. We, who believe in the omnipotence of God; have no difficulty in accounting for the existence

<sup>3</sup> Heb. iv. 14—16.

of thousands of facts which surpass our comprehension. And the same solution will satisfy every reasonable man, with respect to that most incomprehensible of all facts, viz. That our Lord Jesus Christ is God and Man, perfect God, and perfect Man ; *equal to the Father, as touching his Godhead, and inferior to the Father, as touching his Manhood.* (c)

Nor let it be imagined that this is a mere speculative doctrine, the belief or disbelief of which cannot affect a man's moral character, nor, consequently, his expectations in a future state. No doctrine which God has vouchsafed to reveal to us, can be disbelieved, without destroying the foundation of all true morality ; without denying the truth and wisdom and braving the power of the Most High. The primary use of every doctrine of revealed religion, is to teach the proud spirit of man to bow before the throne of God, with that entire submission of heart and mind, of will and understanding, which the clearest dictates of reason and common sense prescribe, and without which there can be no true obedience, no true morality, no genuine hope of pardon and acceptance with God.

And as the doctrine of the Divinity, Humiliation and Exaltation of the Son of God, is thus, in

claiming our belief, a test of the spirit of obedience, so is it, when believed, a most certain guide to the true nature of Christian obedience, and a most powerful motive to pursue it. The character of the second Adam, as traced in the words of our text, is throughout a most striking contrast to that of the first Adam and his rebellious descendants. “The first Adam was of the earth, earthly;” yet, low and impotent as he was, he dared to commit the impious robbery of aspiring to be equal with God. “The second Adam was the Lord from heaven.” In him it was no robbery to be equal with God; yet he voluntarily emptied himself of his glory; and took upon himself the form of a servant; the likeness, and fashion, and nature of a man. And the whole course of his life was equally at variance with the general conduct of the children of this world. They begin by being disobedient to parents; or, if they yield an external obedience, rebel in their hearts, sighing for the age when they may shake off all restraint, and become, as it is expressed, their own masters, that is, the slaves of their own unbridled desires. Jesus, on the contrary, the Son of God, disdained not the character of the carpenter’s son; he meekly submitted to Joseph and Mary; and we have strong

reason to believe, if not positive evidence to assert, (D) that he remained in subjection to them for thirty years. The children of men delight in riot and dissipation ; he in seclusion, in abstinence, and prayer. They are proud, overbearing, and revengeful, and think nothing so disgraceful as to submit to an injury or insult. He, who made man, and therefore knew in what the true dignity of man consists, was “meek and lowly of heart,” patient and forgiving in everything. They, without any power to make effectual resistance, never quietly endure even the word of admonition, much less the infliction of severer punishments, however well merited. He, who possessed Almighty power ; who could have called down legions of angels to his rescue, who with a word, or without a word, could have caused the whole of his enemies to fall to the ground, never to rise again ; contented himself with *shewing, for our sakes,* that he possessed the power, by miraculously causing the sturdy band who came to arrest him to go backward and fall to the ground.<sup>4</sup> And having thus shewn that “no man could take his life from him, but that he laid it down of himself, having power to lay it down, and power to

<sup>4</sup> John, xviii. 6.

take it again,"<sup>5</sup> he suffered the band to rise from the ground, and lead him away, "as a lamb to the slaughter."

Time would fail me to tell of all the horrid indignities that were heaped upon him in his progress from the Garden of Gethsemane to the accursed tree, and the astonishing patience with which he submitted to them all; the true extent of which submission can only be understood by those who bear constantly in mind, that He, who endured all this; who was buffeted and spit upon, hunted down by the clamours of an infuriate mob, scourged, derided, crucified; held the whole powers of nature in his hands, and could, with a single effort of his will, have swept that whole generation of vipers from the face of the earth. When he was called upon in derision by the chief priests, to "come down from the cross, and they would believe," nothing would have been more easy for him than to answer the summons, and change places with his exulting murderers. But how then could the Scriptures have been fulfilled? What then would have become of the fallen race of man, to purchase whose redemption he came into the world? No, the Son of

<sup>5</sup> John, x. 18.

God was not to be turned aside by any provocation from his deliberate purpose of love, in the execution of which those wicked men were unconscious instruments. He exhausted the bitter cup to the very dregs. He paid the price of our redemption, to the last drop of his precious blood : And by thus *humbling himself* unto the most ignominious death, he crowned the example of *human perfection*, which it was one of the purposes of his coming to give us, as the want of such example was one of the evil consequences of Adam's transgression.

It is incredible that any person should hesitate for a moment which of these to take as the object of his imitation ; the first Adam, whose pride and disobedience entailed a curse upon our race ; or the second Adam, whose humility and submission removed the curse ; our first parents, whose bodies are still mingled with the dust, as the punishment of their presumption ; or our Redeemer, whom, because "he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," God raised from the dead the third day ; and hath, moreover, exalted him *in his human nature*, and "given him a name which is above every name : that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,

of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth ; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

## DISCOURSE II.

### ON THE NATURE AND OFFICE OF THE HOLY GHOST.

Preached on the Thursday before WHITSUNDAY, 1824.

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JOHN, XVI. 7.

*"Nevertheless, I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away ; for if I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you ; but if I depart, I will send him unto you."*

---

THUS did Jesus himself act the part of a comforter to his disciples, when sorrow had filled their hearts on the intimation that he was about to leave them. Many other powerful topics of encouragement he affectionately dwelt upon, for the purpose of preparing them for the great change that was at hand ; but this is the one which he seemed most anxious to impress upon their minds. In St John's report of

his conversations with them on the day before his crucifixion, this promise is repeated no less than four or five times, once in the words of our text, once in the xv. and twice in the xiv. chapter. “When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.” “The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” “I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.” To which we may add another passage, in the chapter from which our Text is taken, “Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth.”

I have brought these passages together, because they mutually throw light upon each other, and seem sufficient to satisfy any reasonable man respecting the nature and attributes of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter.

In the first place, it is manifest that the Holy Ghost is a *Person*. The last quoted passage is of itself sufficient to establish this, “When he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth.”—*He, the Spirit of Truth.*—The expression is pointed, studiously accurate, and manifestly intended to mark the *personality* of the Spirit of Truth. The other texts produced contain strong confirmations of the same doctrine. “The Comforter, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *He* shall testify of me.” “The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, *He* shall teach you all things.” In both these passages, as well as in the preceding, the pointed use of the *personal* pronoun clearly indicates the *personality* of the Holy Ghost. The next contains a different, but not less evident indication of the same truth. “I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter”—*Another Comforter*—Surely it must have been understood from these words, that the *other* Comforter was to be a similar Being to the one who was about to leave them, namely to the Divine *Person* who then addressed them.

Taking, then, these passages together, no one can reasonably wish for clearer proof than they afford, that the Holy Ghost is *a person*.

Nor do they less clearly shew, that he is a *different person* from the Father and from the Son. Different from the Father, because he is “given by the Father, sent by the Father, sent from the Father,” and “proceedeth from the Father.” Different from the Son, because he is “*another comforter*,” ‘ whose coming depended upon the Son’s departure ;’ because he is “sent in the name of the Son,” to “testify of the Son,” and because he proceedeth from the Son as well as from the Father, inasmuch as he is “sent by the Son,” and is “the Spirit of the Son,”<sup>1</sup> as absolutely and truly, as he is sent by the Father, and is the Spirit of the Father.

As a *person*, therefore, the Holy Ghost is *distinct* from the Father and from the Son. But, as of the same Divine nature, he cannot be distinguished from either ; for, as we shall now proceed to shew, *He is very and eternal God.*

His coming was to compensate, yea, and more than compensate, for the departure of our Lord. “I tell you the truth. It is expedient for you that I go away ; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you.” What sort of person,

<sup>1</sup> Gal. iv. 6.

then, must this Comforter be, whose coming is more advantageous than the continued presence of the Son of God? Surely he must possess equal power, wisdom, and goodness, to protect, instruct, comfort, and support the brethren, during the fiery trials that awaited them. But he who is equal to God the Son in power, and wisdom, and goodness, must be possessed of infinite power, infinite wisdom, infinite goodness, that is, of the power, and wisdom, and goodness of God. Thus the words of our text alone would serve to prove, that the Holy Ghost is God.

The same inference may be drawn from the very titles by which he is distinguished. “*The Holy Ghost,*” that is, the Spirit *essentially and pre-eminently HOLY*, which is the most adorable attribute of God, a glory that belongs to no other. For “there is none holy as the Lord.”<sup>2</sup> God is “THE HOLY ONE;”<sup>3</sup> “the Holy One of Israel;”<sup>4</sup> “holy and reverend is his name.”<sup>5</sup> The term holy is indeed applied, in a subordinate sense, to persons and things that have been sanctified, or that have been consecrated to the service of the Most Holy; but the whole tenor of Christ’s discourse, as well as all

<sup>2</sup> 1 Sam. ii. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Hos. xi. 9.

<sup>4</sup> Ps. lxxi. 22.

<sup>5</sup> Ps. cxi. 9.

that has been recorded of the office of the Comforter, shews that it is not applied to Him in any subordinate sense. We never read that He was sanctified or made obedient ; but that, by his own inherent efficacy, and spontaneous co-operation with the Father and the Son,<sup>6</sup> He sanctifieth the elect unto obedience.<sup>7</sup> The title Holy is, therefore, applied to the Spirit in its highest and most absolute sense. And that it could not be so applied by our Lord to any but God alone, is manifest from the decided manner in which he himself declined a similar title, when applied to him as Man, during his state of trial and humiliation. (E) “ Why call-est thou me good ? There is none good but one, that is God.”<sup>8</sup> So also there is none holy but one, namely, God ; and that Spirit, whose distinguishing title is *the* Holy, must be God.

A similar argument may be drawn from his being called “ the Spirit of Truth ;” for “ He that is true,” as well as “ He that is holy,”<sup>9</sup> is God. He is elsewhere called “ The Spirit of Wisdom,”<sup>1</sup> in that superlative sense in which “ God only is wise.”<sup>2</sup> And, to crown all his titles, he is called “ The Spi-

<sup>6</sup> Compare John, xvi. 13—15, with v. 19—21 ; and see Note (c.)    <sup>7</sup> 1 Pet. i. 2.    <sup>8</sup> Matt. xix. 17.    <sup>9</sup> Rev. iii. 7.  
<sup>1</sup> Ephes. i. 17.    <sup>2</sup> Jude, 25.

rit of God ;”<sup>3</sup> but God is a Spirit ; and therefore the Spirit of God, though he may be *personally*, cannot be *essentially* different from God himself.

Having thus evinced the distinct Personality and absolute Divinity of the Holy Ghost, we now proceed, with increased reverence, to consider the Office he vouchsafes to sustain in the work of our salvation.

Much confusion has arisen in men’s minds, from a want of due circumspection and mutual understanding in the use of the terms, by which the different branches of that Office have been designated. The learned and judicious Bishop Pearson, in his Exposition of the Creed, includes the whole under the general term Sanctification, which he subdivides into general Revelation, individual Illumination, Regeneration, Assistance and Direction, Union with Christ, Assurance of Adoption, and Ministerial Ordination.

The chief confusion has been occasioned by a want of uniformity in the meaning attached to the word Regeneration, which is sometimes used to denote the *commencement*, and sometimes the *maturity* of Christian Sanctification. Similar ambigu-

<sup>3</sup> Rom. viii. 9.

ties of speech are of frequent occurrence, and are, perhaps, unavoidable consequences of the imperfection of human language ; (F) particularly when employed upon spiritual subjects, for the clear representation of which it is altogether inadequate, and can only convey an obscure idea of many most interesting truths through the complicated medium of allegorical figures. The sources of these figures, again, are circumscribed and confined within very narrow bounds, by the puny capacity of us to whom they are addressed ; so that, from the limited means of representation, and the boundless extent of the subjects to be represented, a very minute change in the former frequently indicates a great difference in the latter.

Thus, in the case before us, the pardon of original sin, and admission into covenant with God by Baptism, which is now, generally speaking, the first operation of the Spirit in the sanctification of an individual, is called by our Lord, in his conversation with Nicodemus, “ being born again.” And the reception of the “ spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father ;”<sup>4</sup> that is, whereby we are assured that we are at that moment, and, if we be

<sup>4</sup> Rom. viii. 15.

true to ourselves, may continue to all eternity, “the children of God,” inasmuch as we feel ourselves “led by the Spirit of God”<sup>5</sup> to yield a willing obedience to his holy commandments—this happy state, which comprises the greatest maturity of sanctification attainable here below, is called by St John “being born of God.” Thus the commencement and achievement of all that the Spirit does for an individual in this life, are represented by figures very minutely differing from each other; and by not attending to the difference that does exist in the *signs*, too many have lost sight of the important difference in the *things signified*. They include both figures under the common name of Regeneration, or New Birth; and then, arguing from analogy, and from those passages of Scripture which refer to our being “born again,” that the new birth is the commencement, and from those which refer to our being “born of God,” that it is the perfection of human sanctification here on earth, they insist that there is no interval between the beginning and the completion of our sanctification; that the Spirit does his whole work at once; that the transition from absolute darkness to the clear-

<sup>5</sup> Rom. viii. 14.

est light, from gross carnal-mindedness and depravity to the highest state of Christian perfection, is instantaneous; and that, therefore, whoever have not "the earnest of the Spirit,"<sup>6</sup> and "the love of God shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost,"<sup>7</sup> are "without Christ, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."<sup>8</sup>

Would men, however, come to the study of the Scriptures with more humble and teachable minds; would they more industriously employ the reason which God has given them, and place it more meekly under the guidance of the Spirit of Truth, they might easily discover that it is not thus the Spirit helpeth our infirmities; but that, feeding us first with milk, and then with stronger meat, he, as an affectionate parent, *gradually* brings us up from infancy to maturity, from babes in Christ "to perfect men, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." The very figures employed by our Saviour and by St John, nearly as they resemble each other, may, if attentively considered, be perceived to be sufficiently different, to mark

<sup>6</sup> 2 Cor. v. 5.

<sup>7</sup> Rom. v. 5.

<sup>8</sup> Ephes. ii. 12.

the difference of the things they represent. The expression *born again*, clearly refers to a previous birth, namely, the natural, by which we are “born in sin, and the children of wrath.” It is therefore, with peculiar propriety, employed by our Lord to denote that operation of the Spirit in baptism, by which we are delivered from the guilt of original sin, and “made the children of grace ;” being made capable of attaining to *true* faith and obedience, and thus obtaining “power to become the sons of God.”<sup>9</sup> The expression *born of God* has, on the other hand, no reference to any previous birth, but merely to a state in which we were not the children of God. Baptism, though it makes us *children of grace*, does not necessarily make us at the same time, in this peculiar sense, *children of God*.<sup>(g)</sup> This is a higher degree, to which we do not attain till, by duly availing ourselves of the grace and power conferred by baptism, we become possessed of a genuine and lively faith in Christ Jesus, a willing heart to obey his commandments, and a meek and quiet spirit, entirely given up to the guidance of the Spirit of God. Then, and not till then, we know that we are the children of God, for “as many as are led

<sup>9</sup> John, i. 12.

by the Spirit of God, they are the children of God;"<sup>1</sup> and " Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God."<sup>2</sup> Then, and not till then, we can be said to have been born of God ; for " Whosoever believeth," that is, truly and fully believeth, " that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God."<sup>3</sup> " Every one that doeth righteousness is born of Him ;"<sup>4</sup> and " Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin."<sup>5</sup>

We have all, my brethren, been born again. We have all cause to bless God that we have, by baptism, been made children of grace. And, therefore, the most interesting inquiry now is, how may we all attain to the higher and more glorious distinction of being children of God ?

As " no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost ;"<sup>6</sup> and every step of our Christian progress depends upon the agency of the Spirit ; a true knowledge of Him is manifestly of primary importance. Before we have attained to a right faith respecting the Person and Divine Nature of the Comforter, we are not in a condition to derive any farther substantial advantage from the offices he vouchsafes to perform in the work of our

<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii. 14.

<sup>2</sup> 1 John, iii. 10.

<sup>3</sup> 1 John, v. 1.

<sup>4</sup> 1 John, ii. 29.

<sup>5</sup> 1 John, iii. 9.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 3.

salvation. But when we have gained that step, we are conscious by whose assistance we have gained it ; and being now duly sensible of the dignity of our immediate Helper and Guide, we are duly grateful for his aid. We are now convinced that “the Spirit of God,” who hath wrought this faith in us, actually “dwelleth in us;”<sup>7</sup> and knowing that Spirit to be the very and eternal God himself, are impressed with the truth of the Apostle’s representation, that we are “the temple of God;”<sup>8</sup> and therefore dare not, under pain of the threatened destruction, defile that holy temple ; but anxiously flee fornication, and every impure, every sinful thought, word, and deed, earnestly desiring to “glorify God in our body, and in our spirit, which are God’s.”<sup>9</sup>

Knowing that “the Spirit,” which “helpeth our infirmities,”<sup>1</sup> is the Lord God omnipotent, we do not faint under any trials, nor give way to any temptations, but are “strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might,” and “put on the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”<sup>2</sup> Knowing that “the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation,”<sup>3</sup> which

<sup>7</sup> 1 Cor. iii. 16.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> 1 Cor. vi. 20.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii. 26. <sup>2</sup> Ephes. vi. 10, 11. <sup>3</sup> Ephes. i. 17, 18.

“enlighteneth the eyes of our understanding in the knowledge of God,” is the very God of all wisdom himself, we feel deeply impressed with the value of his instructions ; and therefore, praying for their continuance, apply ourselves diligently to the study of the Bible, employing our understandings in active, but humble obedience to our Divine Teacher. Thus we continually increase in the knowledge of the sanctifying truth of God’s word.<sup>4</sup> The more progress we make in this sublime science, the more are we convinced of our own natural blindness, and inability to advance a single step therein, without the guidance of the Spirit of Truth; and not only so, but we feel, that should we, by any arrogance or misconduct, provoke Him to forsake us, all our light would be turned into darkness ; all our knowledge into folly ; all our joy into bitterness ; all our comfort into despair. This consideration effectually keeps us humble ; and in proportion to our increasing knowledge of “the riches of his grace,” we become more heartily desirous to secure them, and, therefore, more instant in prayer, more constant at church, more frequent at the Table of the Lord ; more attentive to God’s

<sup>4</sup> John, xvii. 17.

word, whether read or expounded by His appointed ministers; more diligent in studying it at home; more uniform and earnest in our endeavours to yield a full and entire obedience to its precepts;—in a word, more deeply impressed with true Christian faith, more completely, and submissively, and thankfully “led by the Spirit of God.”

Whosoever has attained to this degree of sanctification, cannot fail to reap the rewards of an approving conscience, to experience that heartfelt satisfaction and delight in the service of God, and that enlarged comprehension of his word, which are called in Scripture “an unction from the Holy One;”<sup>5</sup> “the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father;” when “the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God;”<sup>6</sup> by the delight he enables us to take in the service of God, and the unreserved obedience he enables us to yield to God’s commandments. This is also called “the *earnest* of the Spirit,”<sup>7</sup> being a part (however small) of the promised reward, and a security that if we preserve *it*, and remain true to our engagements, we shall, in due time, receive the whole.

<sup>5</sup> 1 John, ii. 20.      <sup>6</sup> Rom. viii. 15, 16.      <sup>7</sup> 2 Cor. i. 22.

That this may be the happy experience of every one here present, may God of his infinite mercy grant, through Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory for ever.—Amen.

## DISCOURSE III.

### ON THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

Preached on the Thursday before TRINITY SUNDAY, 1824.

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MATTHEW, iii. 16, 17.

*“ And Jesus, when he was baptised, went up straightway out of the water ; and, lo ! the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lightning upon him ; and, lo ! a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”*

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IT has been suggested, that these words do not prove the Spirit of God to have descended upon Jesus in the *form* of a dove ; for the expression, “descending like a dove,” may merely be descriptive of the *motion* with which the Spirit descended. It cannot, however, be denied, that the words will bear the former and more usual interpretation, quite as well as the latter ; and I am disposed to

adhere to it, for three reasons. First, because its being so understood by the majority of readers is a proof that it is more natural and obvious to consider “descending like a dove” as indicating the form and similitude, than merely the kind of motion with which the Spirit descended. Secondly, because it appears, that the Spirit did assume a visible form; and it is not natural that so extraordinary a thing should be mentioned, without mentioning what that form was. And, thirdly, because the form of a *dove* is expressive of meekness and love; and, therefore, is no less significant an emblem of the effect of the Spirit upon Christ and all true Christians, than the “cloven tongues, like as of fire,” were of the peculiar gifts conferred upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost.

The form in which the Spirit descended upon our Lord after his baptism, is, however, of comparatively small importance. The fact of his having descended at all, is most interesting, and deserves our most serious attention.

Christ gave abundant proofs, during his manifestation in the flesh, of the completeness of his Godhead. For example, when he said, “Before Abraham was, I am,”<sup>1</sup> or, “I and my Father are

<sup>1</sup> John, viii. 58.

one,”<sup>2</sup> he asserted; and when he said to the stormy waves, “ Peace, be still,”<sup>3</sup> and was obeyed, he proved, that he was very God. Yet we see from the passage before us, that as Man, he was, like other men, sanctified by the Holy Ghost; who assumed a visible form on this occasion, for the purpose of demonstrating so important a truth to the world.

This truth is important, because it shews that, as the infinite perfections of Christ’s Godhead could not be altered by its union with finite and imperfect man; so the natural frailty, the mereness of his manhood, was not altered by its personal union with God. For, if the human nature of Christ had been already exalted into super-human security and strength by its union with God the Son, there would have been no occasion for the descent of God the Holy Ghost.

It is also important, as shewing that, though of the same Divine nature, which is essentially one, still God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, are two distinct persons; for the Son was personally united with the man Christ Jesus before he thus received the Holy Ghost. And, at the same time

<sup>2</sup> John, x. 30.

<sup>3</sup> Mark, iv. 39.

that two persons in the Godhead were manifested to the world by the *visible* descent of the Holy Ghost upon the God-Man Christ Jesus, lo, a third Divine Person announced himself, in “ a voice from Heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

Thus does the passage selected for our Text conduct us at once to the great doctrine of the Trinity, which is so vehemently assailed in these days, as indeed it has ever been since its first promulgation by our Lord. Nor is it surprising that the Enemy of our Salvation should have been so eager and persevering in his attacks upon this holy doctrine ; for it is not only one of the chief bulwarks, but it is the very capitol and centre of the kingdom of Christ, to lose or possess which, is to lose or possess the whole. If we give up the Divinity of the Holy Ghost, we give up all the force and vitality of that doctrine which has recently occupied our attention, of his regenerating, sustaining, sanctifying influences. If we give up the Divinity of Jesus Christ, we not only deprive ourselves of all those powerful and peculiarly Christian motives to obedience, which are derived from the love of God the Father in sending his only Son to die for our redemption, and the love and condescen-

sion of that Son in desiring to be so sent ; but we surrender, as our adversaries themselves declare, all the proper efficacy of the Atonement, which he came into the world to make for our sins ; that is, we surrender every rational and well-founded hope of pardon and acceptance with God. If, therefore, we abandon the doctrine of the Trinity, we abandon the very life and soul of the Gospel,—we abandon the whole of Christianity at once.

The truth of this statement will be most apparent to those who have most assiduously, and devoutly, and humbly studied the word of God. But it may be briefly, and, I think, satisfactorily confirmed, by a reference to our Lord's last instructions to his Apostles, as recorded by the Evangelist St. Matthew.

At his most solemn appearance after his Resurrection, that appearance in Galilee, which he had announced before his Crucifixion, and to witness which the women, who first learnt that he was risen, were directed by the Angel, and by Jesus<sup>4</sup> himself to summon the disciples in general, his instructions to the Apostles were, “ Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father,

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xxviii. 7 and 10.

and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.”<sup>5</sup> These words certainly contain the doctrine of the Trinity ; for they shew, that in that solemn act of religion, whereby we enter into covenant with God, we enter into precisely the same relation towards the Father, towards the Son, and towards the Holy Ghost, thus binding ourselves to render to each of them the same unlimited honour, worship, and obedience. But “ it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.”<sup>6</sup> Each of the three Persons, therefore, to whose service we are dedicated in baptism, is the Lord our God. Yet “ we know that there is none other God but one ;”<sup>7</sup> which Divine Unity is indicated in the form of baptism by the use of the word *name* in the singular number ; for the expression is “ *in the name,*” and not *in the names,* “ of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” Thus we may learn from this single passage, that “ the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God ; and yet they are not three Gods, but one God.”

And not only is the baptismal form, so solemn-

<sup>5</sup> Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.    <sup>6</sup> Luke, iv. 8.    <sup>7</sup> 1 Cor. viii. 4.

ly introduced, a proof that the doctrine of the Trinity is true ; but such a proof, as shews that it includes all the articles of the Christian faith. It is apparent on the very face of the institution, that a full and unfeigned belief in the doctrine of the Trinity is sufficient to render a penitent adult a worthy recipient of baptism. But, as we may learn from the case of the Ethiopian eunuch, an unreserved assent to all the peculiar doctrines of Christianity is indispensable : for when “ the eunuch said, See, here is water ; what doth hinder me to be baptised ? Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest ;”<sup>8</sup> thus requiring of him a hearty assent to all that he had preached unto him concerning Jesus. “ And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God,” which form of words always implies a full assent to all that Jesus taught. And upon this expression of belief, Philip proceeded at once to baptise him. Since, therefore, it appears from the words of the institution, that a full belief in the doctrine of the Trinity is a *sufficient*, and, from other parts of Scripture, that an unreserved belief in all the articles of the Christian faith is a *necessary*, qualifi-

<sup>8</sup> Acts, viii. 36, 37.

cation for baptism, it follows, that the doctrine of the Trinity includes all the articles of the Christian faith; and that in the pregnant words of our Lord, which we have quoted from the close of St. Matthew's Gospel, all the doctrines of Christianity are comprehended under the doctrine of the Trinity, as all its precepts are under the precept, "To observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

That our Lord's concluding instructions were thus understood by the earliest Christians, and, therefore, by the Apostles themselves, to whom they were primarily addressed, appears from the practice of the primitive Church, organized and established under the immediate episcopacy of the Apostles. For their Creeds, or Rules of Faith, consisted, at first, simply of a declaration of belief in the Holy Trinity. (<sup>14</sup>) To this they referred all the doctrinal points of instruction which were thought necessary for adult converts, previous to baptism; as it was to this a full and rational assent was required, before admission to that sacred ordinance. *I believe in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost*, appears to have been the whole Apostolic Creed, in which none of the *things* to be believed concerning the Deity are recited, but are

considered as contained, by implication, in the confession of a right faith respecting the Persons.

To counteract particular heresies as they arose, more and more of the details of our faith were, from time to time, introduced into these summaries ; but still the doctrine of one God in Trinity formed the outline of every authorized creed ; and all the alterations that were ever made, consisted in filling up that outline from the word of God, in those parts where heretics shewed a disposition to fill it up from their own arrogant imaginations, or expressing it more strongly where they attempted to explain it away. The ancient creeds retained in our church, answer exactly to this description ; for they consist of the doctrine of the Trinity, clearly and carefully, and in one of them, strongly and minutely expressed, filled up with certain details, to guard against particular heresies. And it is evident, that if it were required to swell those creeds till they became, instead of summaries, complete expositions of Christian faith, they might still be referred to the same heads ; for every article of faith must have a reference, direct or collateral, either to God the Father, God the Son, or God the Holy Ghost, or to the united Trinity.

Were the impugners of the blessed Trinity ca-

pable of discerning the truth, what has been said in this and our two preceding Discourses might serve, with God's blessing, to convince them of their error, and the danger of persevering in it. But, alas ! " this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted and healed." They make, indeed, a show of attending to such arguments as we have produced, but the answers they give always betray the " evil heart of unbelief," which prevents their seeing the force of any reasoning founded on the word of God. One or two fundamental errors, the offspring of pride and impiety, have poisoned the sources of truth in their minds, and keep them in a state of slavish infidelity. Thousands of times have these errors been confuted, but still they chain down their miserable victims with the same strong delusion as before. Earnestly, therefore, as I pray for the deliverance of these poor deluded captives, it is not so much in the hope of extricating them, as of preventing others from falling into the snare, that I now proceed, once more, to expose the fallacy of the principles

which lie at the root of all opposition to the mysterious doctrine of the Trinity.

The chief of these is an assertion that it involves a manifest contradiction, and, consequently, is a doctrine which no proof can establish. For in saying "the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, and yet they are not three Gods, but one God," they contend, that we first distinctly name three Gods, and then immediately contradict ourselves, by declaring that they are not three Gods, but one God.

Did we indeed say that the three Persons of the Godhead make only one Person, attaching the same idea to the word person in both places, we should be guilty of the absurd contradiction with which we are charged, and might as well maintain that three miles are equal to one mile, or, abstractedly, three to one. But as there is no absurdity in saying that three miles are equal to one league, so neither is there any *contradiction* in saying that there are three Persons in the Godhead, and yet but one God. Let no one imagine he can perceive in this, or any other union or combination that can be thought of, the most remote analogy to the union of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in the Godhead. Of the nature and manner of this Divine

Union we know, and are capable of knowing, absolutely nothing ; and all speculations on the subject have led, and ever must lead, to error and confusion. I have, therefore, chosen the simplest illustration that presented itself ; one not likely to lead to any unprofitable subtleties, while it is quite sufficient to shew that the doctrine of three Persons and one God is not of that self-confuting nature which no evidence can establish.

Again, did we say that the Father is *a* God, the Son *a* God, and the Holy Ghost *a* God, making each Person a distinct and separate God, and then declare that they are not three Gods, but one God ; we should not only be guilty of that stupid contradiction and arithmetical blunder with which we are charged ; but should be guilty of a far more inexcusable error, namely, that of dividing the Divine Essence, which both reason and revelation declare to be indivisible. We, however, commit neither of these errors ; we “neither divide the substance, nor confound the Persons.” When we regard the Persons, we declare that they are three, because there are three distinct Persons, to each of whom the Scriptures ascribe Eternity, Omnipotence, Omniscience, and all the other glorious and adorable attributes of Deity. Each of these Persons, there-

fore, we are compelled to acknowledge is God—not *a* God; for when we contemplate the Substance, that is the Divine Nature, which is thus attributed to each separate Person, our reason confirms, what revelation declares, that it is essentially one and indivisible, being utterly void of every mark that can distinguish one individual from another.

With regard to the Divine Nature, each Person of the blessed Trinity is Eternal; which excludes all distinction of time or age: each of them is Almighty, so that there is no difference in power: each of them is Omniscient; whatever, therefore, is known by the Father is known by the Son, and known by the Holy Ghost: (¹)each of them is Omnipresent; and, therefore, wherever the Father is, there is also the Son, and there the Holy Ghost: whatever also is the will of the Father, the same is the will of the Son and the will of the Holy Ghost. In short, to whichever of the Divine attributes we look for a distinction between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, we find that the infinite perfection of those attributes excludes all distinction; so that, as touching their Godhead, each of them is in every respect the same as the others, each of them is in every respect

the same as the whole. *In this Trinity none is afore or after other ; none is greater or less than another ; but the whole three Persons are co-eternal together and co-equal.*

Thus have we shewn the rottenness of that boasted position of the Socinians, That the doctrine of *one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity*, involves a manifest contradiction. If, however, in some lucid interval, any of them be enabled to perceive its unsoundness, and feel it tottering beneath them ; instead of taking alarm at the dismal gulf that yawns below, and fleeing for refuge to the bosom of the Church, they entrench themselves behind another equally fallacious defence of the kingdom of Darkness, exclaiming, That the doctrine is incomprehensible, and that it is impossible to believe what they do not understand.

This might be a valid objection were they required to believe any thing respecting the *nature* of the Divine union between Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ; or the *manner* in which the incarnate Word could become inferior to the Father, as touching his Manhood, without impairing his equality to the Father, as touching his Godhead. But the *doctrine* of the Trinity contains no speculations on these or any other points which it declares to be

*incomprehensible.* It simply asserts the truth of certain facts revealed in Scripture—facts which in no way contradict each other, and which, therefore, no reasonable man, who admits the existence of a Being infinitely superior to himself in power and intelligence, can deny, merely because he is incapable of understanding them.

If that be a sufficient ground for denying a divine truth, we must strip the Deity of all his Attributes; we must deny the eternity, the omnipotence, the omnipresence, the omniscience of God; for they are all equally beyond our apprehension. Take, for example, his omniscience, an attribute which every one who believes that there is a God acknowledges to belong to him. Consider it not only as to its unlimited extent, but also with regard to its prospective and retrospective view; and let any one say whether he can form the most remote conception of the nature of that knowledge, which can comprehend at one glance every object of knowledge in the boundless universe, from the highest to the lowest, past, present, and to come, from the beginning to the end of time. By the infinite perfection of the Divine knowledge, the past, the present, and the future, are brought together and identified with each other, by

a union quite as inconceivable to us as the union of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost in the Godhead. If, therefore, man's limited comprehension is to be set up as the standard of possibility, we must deny the omniscience of God. We must also deny his eternity, his omnipotence, and all his other Divine attributes; for they all equally surpass our comprehension. Thus religion would be completely driven out of the world, and all mankind would become atheists. Nor, were they consistent in their principles of reasoning, would they stop here; but would go on to deny their own existence, the union of soul and body, the existence of light and heat, and a thousand other things, of whose truth we are absolutely certain, but the nature and manner of which we are utterly unable to explain.

If, on the contrary, there be amongst the Socinians one modest and real inquirer after truth; one whose doubts respecting the Trinity do not arise from intellectual pride; such a one may still, with the Divine blessing, be recalled from the paths of infidelity, by reflecting how little he actually knows of the most familiar works of God. How entirely ignorant, for example, he is of the origin of his own *existence*, and the manner in which it is supported.

"How the *bones* do grow in the womb of her that is with child;"<sup>1</sup> and how food contributes to the preservation of life. Knowing, therefore, so little even of his own nature, he will not be offended because he cannot "find out the Almighty to perfection;" and instead of making his ignorance an excuse for continuing still in error, it will now only incite him to a more diligent examination of the Scriptures, for the purpose of certifying himself whether they do indeed contain the doctrine, concerning which he has been so unhappy as to doubt. Such an examination, properly conducted, cannot fail to create in him a thorough conviction that the doctrine of the Trinity is contained in the Bible.

If he still find any difficulty in believing it, convinced of the unreasonableness of that difficulty, and that it can only proceed from the obscurity and imperfection of that organ of faith, by which spiritual things are discerned, he will earnestly pray for the illumination of the Spirit. Encouraged by the promise of our Lord Jesus, saying, "Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you;"<sup>2</sup> he will continue reading, searching, pray-

<sup>1</sup> Eccl. xi. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. vii. 7.

ing, inquiring ; till at last, by continual knocking, the door of separation between his heart and the kingdom of heaven shall be opened ; his spiritual eye shall be enlightened, and he shall “ behold wondrous things out of God’s law,”<sup>3</sup> which were before hidden from his view. All his doubts will be dispelled. He will embrace the holy doctrine of the Trinity with full assurance of faith, and through it discover the whole mystery of godliness. And if he continue steadfast in this faith, still diligently searching the Scriptures, with prayer and supplication, and thanksgiving ; resolutely holding fast his integrity and his humility ; and manfully resisting every temptation which the devil may throw in his way, he will doubtless go on unto perfection, “ growing in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever.—Amen.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Ps. cxix. 18.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Pet. iii. 18.

## DISCOURSE IV.

### ON FAITH.

Preached on the Thursday after TRINITY SUNDAY, 1824.

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HEBREWS, III. 12.

*"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God."*

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“ WHO knows not the story of Adam’s fall ?  
Who hath not heard of the sin of Eve, our mother ?  
If there were no Scripture, yet the strange irregularity of our whole nature, which all the time of our life runs counter to order and right reason ;  
the woful misery of our condition, being a scene of sorrow, without rest or contentment ;” and, above all, the appalling, and otherwise inexplicable visitation of death, to which we are every day liable,

though endowed by our Creator with a living soul ; “ all this might breed some general suspicion, that from the beginning it was not so ; that He who made us lords of his creatures, made us not so worthless, and vile,” and transient, “ as we now are ; but that some common parent of us all had drunken some strange and devilish poison, wherewith the whole race is infected. This poison, saith the Scripture, was the breach of God’s commandment in Paradise, by eating of the forbidden fruit.”<sup>1</sup> Through “ an evil heart of unbelief,” man “ departed from the living God,” and yielded to the enticements of the devil ; who, though only permitted to appear in the odious, unengaging shape of a serpent, yet succeeded in persuading him to eat of the tree whereof the Lord had commanded him that he should not eat, “ for in the day he did eat thereof he should surely die.”

Thus was the devil, as Christ has declared, “ a murderer from the beginning ;”<sup>2</sup> for all the death and misery that have since desolated the world, have been occasioned by this his act of treacherous and deliberate malice. He is also “ a liar, and the father of it ;”<sup>3</sup> for whereas God assured our first

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Mede.

<sup>2</sup> John, viii. 44.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

parents that in the day they eat of that fruit they should die, “ the Serpent said unto the woman, ye shall not surely die;” probably accompanying the deceitful assertion by eating of the fruit himself, that she might *see* that it was fit for food.

Unhappily, most unhappily, the woman’s faith gave way under the confident assertions and designing artifices of her murderous betrayer. She believed the lying serpent ; she disbelieved the God of truth, of whose wisdom and goodness she had experienced so many affecting proofs. The “ evil heart of unbelief” prevailed over her better principles ; she departed from God, her only strength ; and so fell an easy victim to the farther suggestions of the devil ; who, knowing from his own experience the powerful effect of pride in producing disobedience, (x) thus continued his attack. “ For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.”<sup>4</sup> Had Eve been possessed of the anchor of faith, she would have answered, as our Lord did when similarly tempted, “ Get thee behind me, Satan :”<sup>5</sup> He in whom I live, and move, and have my being, hath forbid me to

<sup>4</sup> Gen. iii. v.

<sup>5</sup> Luke, iv. 8.

eat thereof, and Him it is my duty and only safety to obey. But having already made shipwreck of faith, she was destitute of the only stay by which she could stem the torrent of temptation, and, accordingly, sunk beneath it. Impelled by ambitious pride, and aspiring to be wise like God, she deserted, as the devils had done before, the station assigned her by Providence. “ She took of the fruit and did eat, and gave also to her husband with her, and he did eat.”<sup>6</sup>

“ No sooner had they transgressed, than they began to reflect upon the guilt, and feel the fatal consequences of so doing. The eyes of their understandings were indeed ‘ opened;’ not in the sense the tempter had promised,” nor in the manner they would afterwards have been opened, had they come to eat of the same fruit with faith, and in obedience to the command of God ; (L) “ but in a manner that discovered to them their own folly, degeneracy, and shame.”<sup>7</sup> “ They became sensible that they were divested of their inward purity, and therefore blushed at their bodily nakedness, of which before they were not ashamed.”<sup>8</sup> If they gained some knowledge respecting good, it served

<sup>6</sup> Gen. iii. 6.

<sup>7</sup> Pyle.

<sup>8</sup> Patrick.

only to shew its irreconcilable opposition to evil, with which they had now become acquainted, and to convince them of their wretchedness and folly in having chosen the evil and lost the good. If they acquired, at the same time, some knowledge of human arts or their principles, (⁹) (as the additional defences now employed to keep the way of the tree of life seem to indicate they did,) it was not a knowledge that in any way elevated their nature, but merely such as to enable them to obey the restless craving of many *real*, as well as imaginary wants, which were inflicted as part of their punishment. For God said unto Adam, “ Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it ; cursed is the ground for thy sake ; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life ; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee ; and thou shalt eat of the herb of the field : In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread, till thou return unto the ground, for out of it wast thou taken ; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”<sup>⁹</sup>

These concluding words explained to them the

<sup>⁹</sup> Gen. iii. 17—19.

true import of the threatened punishment of death, as far as it affected the body : and it is evident, from the terror and dismay with which they were seized, that their consciences had already told them its meaning, as touching the soul ; convincing them that creatures so vile and impure as they were now become, must be banished from the presence of that God, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and in its converse and communion with whom consists the life and happiness of the soul.

From this most dreadful part of the sentence, however, God, of his infinite mercy, offered them an immediate, and from the whole, an eventual release, conferring upon them an invaluable opportunity of procuring his pardon, regaining his favour, and, by a patient continuance in well-doing, even still attaining to glory, honour, and immortality ; though they must now inevitably pass to their immortal state through a vale of sorrow on earth, and through the awfully mysterious valley of the shadow of death. The absolute confirmation of the sentence went far enough to shew the inflexibility of God's justice, and his irreconcilable hatred of sin ; while its conditional remission converted this new evil, which man's infidelity had enabled Satan to introduce, into a means of un-

speakable good. For, in the midst of judgment, God thought upon mercy, and promised a Deliverer, even the “ Seed of the woman,” who should “ bruise the Serpent’s head,” and through faith in whom, guilty man might obtain pardon and reconciliation with God, and work out for himself a far more exceeding weight of happiness and glory than that from which, or from the hopes of which, he had fallen.

From this cursory view of the contents of the three first chapters of the Bible, we perceive that the doctrine of *salvation by faith* is indeed as old as the Creation. In order to guard them from the dangerous influence of PRIDE, mankind have always, from the beginning, been subjected to the attacks of a spiritual enemy, far superior to themselves in power and intelligence ; under whose degrading yoke they are then most certainly enslaved, when they exult the most in their own strength and importance ; against whose unceasing attempts to corrupt and destroy them they are utterly unable to stand of themselves ; but from whom they have never had any thing to fear, as long as (duly conscious of their own weakness) they placed their whole trust and confidence in the Almighty, and in the means appointed by God for their salvation.

Under the Covenant of Works, established at the Creation, man's continuance in his primitive state of innocence and happiness, and his advancement to a still higher state of existence, depended upon *faith* in God his Creator, through want of which he fell. And under the Covenant of Grace, which was mercifully made with him immediately after the Fall, his pardon, and deliverance, and hopes of glory, depend upon *faith* in God his Redeemer, the failure of which no less certainly exposes him to irrecoverable misery and destruction than it has already done to degradation and death.

This great doctrine of Salvation by Faith in the Redeemer was revealed to Adam and Eve, as far as was necessary to enable them firmly to lay hold of the hope set before them in the Covenant of Grace. From them it was transmitted to their descendants, at first by oral tradition, which, but for man's perverseness, would have been a sufficiently secure mode of transmitting truth in the days of primitive longevity. It was, moreover, typified in the rite of animal sacrifice, which, if not formally appointed, was at least accepted, and therefore, we are sure, suggested by God, at its commencement, as a type of the one true sacrifice, to be once offered for the sins of the whole world. (x) And the

knowledge of this doctrine was, from time to time, revived and enlarged by special revelations, and miraculous interpositions of Providence.\*

The most remarkable of these Divine interferences, was the separation of Abraham and descendants to be the more immediate heirs and depositaries of the Promise, the remembrance of which was rapidly disappearing from among the children of men ; who, instead of meekly abiding by the simplicity of the Divine institutions, “ went a-whoring with their own inventions.” Instead of using the rite of animal sacrifice, according to its original intention, as an outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual grace of the promised atonement ; mankind, through “ an evil heart of unbelief,” had almost universally “ departed from the living God.” Retaining merely the sign, without the thing signified ; the body, without the soul of Religion ; they foolishly imagined, that the blood of bulls and of goats could wash away sins. Forgetting that the ultimate amount of all that the Lord requires of Man is, “ to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with their God ;”<sup>1</sup> they arrogantly sought to “ please him with thousands of

\* Read Blomfield’s Dissertation on the Tradition of the Promise.

<sup>1</sup> Micah, vi. 8.

rams, and ten thousands of rivers of oil.”<sup>2</sup> Horribly perverting the tradition respecting the sacrifice of the promised seed, they even gave their “first-born for their transgression, the fruit of their body for the sin of their souls.” “Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils; and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto idols.”<sup>3</sup>

In the midst of this general corruption and apostacy, “God assayed to go and take him a nation, from the midst of another nation, by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched-out arm, and by great terrors,”<sup>4</sup> that one nation at least might know and consider “that the Lord he is God, in heaven above, and in the earth beneath; there is none else.”<sup>5</sup> “Out of the heaven he made the Israelites to hear his voice, that he might instruct them; and upon earth he shewed them his great fire; and they heard his words out of the midst of the fire.”<sup>6</sup> The grand result of all these splendid miracles was the Sinaitic Covenant, the main scope and object of which was the promised Re-

<sup>2</sup> Micah, vi. 7.      <sup>3</sup> Ps. cvi. 37, 38.      <sup>4</sup> Deut. iv. 34.

<sup>5</sup> Deut. iv. 39.      <sup>6</sup> Deut. iv. 36.

deemer, in whose death it received its completion, and whose office and attributes were shadowed forth, in types and symbols, in the various ceremonies and ordinances of the law.

Before the coming of the Messiah, all that it concerned any individual to know was, that God had *promised* redemption and salvation through Him. Whoever knew that the promise had been made, and duly believed in the power and wisdom, the truth and faithfulness of Him who had promised, possessed every thing requisite to enable him to repose, with full assurance of faith, in the mercy of God through Christ. The particular circumstances and time of Christ's appearance in the world, all the details, the express revelation of which would have imposed an unnecessary and dangerous burden on the frailty of human faith, (o) were therefore, in God's mercy, either totally concealed behind the veil of futurity; or very partially revealed, for the purpose of strengthening the faith of those who should live after the events, and must, therefore, be required to believe them. Even the prophets themselves, "who prophesied of the grace that should come unto us," were far from having a full comprehension of "what, or what manner

of time, the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow ;” insomuch, that when they “ inquired and searched diligently” into those particulars, “ it was revealed unto them, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things that are now reported unto us by them that have preached the Gospel.”<sup>7</sup>

But “ when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman ;” and then took place the full “ revelation of the mystery,”<sup>8</sup> “ which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it was now revealed to the holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit ;”<sup>9</sup> which had been, in many points, “ kept secret,” or but partially revealed, “ since the world began ; but is now made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations, for the obedience of faith.”<sup>8</sup>

Let us, therefore, my brethren, who live under the clear light of that revelation, of which the re-

<sup>7</sup> 1 Pet. i. 10, 11, 12.

<sup>8</sup> Rom. xvi. 25, 26.

<sup>9</sup> Ephes. iii. 5.

most glimpse was held so precious by holy men of old ; let us (as we are so vitally concerned to do) make it at all times the subject of our most serious attention ; but more especially now, when the interesting solemnities of a most holy season have left behind them so many powerful admonitions to beware of continuing “ dissemblers with God, deceiving our own selves.”

The qualification, by means of which we are enabled to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, and to secure the victory in our spiritual contest, is now, and ever has been, FAITH. Nor has faith, how much soever its province has been extended, and its influence heightened, at all changed its nature by the coming of the Son of God. Christian faith does not consist, as the language of some injudicious teachers would lead the unwary to imagine, in the overwhelming excitement of undefined, unintelligible *feelings*, though it cannot exist pure and true without producing feelings, at once of the deepest humiliation and most heartfelt comfort. Nor is it a mysterious spell, by which, in spite of himself, the sinner is at once converted into the saint ; and snatched from the lowest sink of corruption, to be placed the next moment in the same rank with the

glorious company of the Apostles, the goodly fellowship of the Prophets, the noble army of Martyrs, and all those holy persons who, through patience and tribulation, have inherited the promises. The faith of the Christian is, what faith has ever been, a firm and unlimited, yet *well-founded* confidence in the means which God has been graciously pleased to appoint for our salvation ; and an entire submission of our understandings, hearts, and inclinations to whatever He has vouchsafed to reveal to us concerning himself and his holy will. Faith, thus defined, comprehends the whole duty of man ; and is the qualification, to the continued possession of which the reward of a blessed immortality, (not for its merit, but for the merits of Him in whom we believe,) is promised in innumerable passages of the Gospel, and the want of which will as infallibly expose us to everlasting misery and contempt.

It must be obvious to every one who has dispassionately attended to the unhappy dissensions, which have agitated the Christian world respecting the great doctrine of salvation by faith, that the disagreement is, in many cases, more verbal than real ; and that the most lamentable divisions

have been created among the disciples of Him, who was ushered into the world as the author of peace and good-will, by the vague and indeterminate application of the term *faith*. It is melancholy to observe, that many of those who have most strenuously enforced the necessity and efficacy of faith, have contributed much to this evil, by the indistinctness of their own ideas on the subject, and, chiefly, by the strange, unscriptural distinction which some of them make between a right, or orthodox, and a lively faith.

The second chapter of the Epistle of St. James does not, as is too often assumed, make any such distinction, nor afford the slightest ground for pronouncing any single article of faith unessential. The distinction there made is not between a *correct*, but between a *speculative*, an *inefficient*, and a lively and operative faith. St. James does not pronounce the belief of any revealed truth unnecessary for salvation, but shews that they may all be believed so imperfectly as to render them unproductive of holiness here, and, consequently, of happiness hereafter. "Thou believest that there is one God," says the Apostle; "thou doest well: the devils also believe and tremble." From which passage no one can infer that it is unnecessary to be-

lieve in one God ; but that something more is required than a mere conviction of the fact.

The criterion pointed out by St. James, by our Lord himself, and by the Holy Ghost, in almost every page of the Gospel—the only criterion by which we can ascertain whether our faith be of the true description or not, is its *fruits* ; “ for as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”<sup>1</sup> It may, however, be useful to consider, what is the difference in the principle itself, between a true and a false faith—what it is that causes the one to produce good fruit, while the other remains barren and unprofitable.

The great difference manifestly consists in the application of the doctrines believed, to the case of the individuals who believe them. The devils believe and *tremble*. None of the comforts, none of the promises, none of the motives or means of obedience, which the Gospel contains, can be applied to them ; therefore, though they know, and cannot help believing, every doctrine of Christianity to be true, they are incapable of deriving any benefit or consolation from them. The specula-

<sup>1</sup> James, ii. 26.

tive and merely formal Christian, also acknowledges the doctrines of our holy religion to be true; but he neglects to apply them to his own individual case, and, therefore, *does not* derive any real advantage from them.

The true believer, on the contrary, never forgets his own particular concern in the truths, the precepts, and the promises of the Gospel. He not only believes that God is merciful, and willeth not the death of a sinner; but he is assured that he himself, weak and vile as he is, if he will faithfully employ the appointed means, may turn from his wickedness and live. He not only believes that God is omniscient and omnipresent; but recollects that He who hateth iniquity, He to whom vengeance belongs, is ever about his own path, and about his bed, and spieth out all his ways. He not only believes that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; but he believes that the precious blood of the Son of God was shed for his sins, even his; and thus rescued him from a state of hopeless misery, and put it into his power to attain to everlasting happiness, to joy unspeakable and full of glory—a belief which must operate by love. He believes the promise that God has made, to give his holy spirit to them that ask it; and, therefore,

he asks it instantly for himself, nothing doubting but he shall receive it. He believes that Christ shall come again at the end of the world to judge both the quick and the dead ; and therefore he never forgets that he must himself stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, to give an account of his deeds, and that his eternal doom of happiness or misery depends entirely upon the course he now pursues. Thus, by embracing to the *full extent* whatever has been revealed by God, the true believer brings home every article of faith to his own heart, and derives from every one of them additional *motives*, and additional *power*, to conform himself to God's holy will.

And such is the vital energy of Christian faith, thus applied to the conscience by the Spirit of Truth, that it is impossible for any one to be at the same time possessed of it, and neglect any thing that he knows to have been commanded, or commit any thing that he knows to have been forbidden by God.<sup>2</sup> Every act of disobedience is an act of infidelity. Every departure from the living God is a return to the evil heart of unbelief. " If any provide not for his own, and specially for those

<sup>2</sup> Read James, ii. 10—20.

of his own house," saith the Spirit who spake by St. Paul, " he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."<sup>3</sup> Would to God this were well considered by the labouring poor of this land! Would to God this were well considered by all who profess and call themselves Christians ! for the same reasoning applies to every violation of charity, to every omission of duty, to every conscious sin committed by one who has believed. To whatever degree of Christian perfection he had previously attained, if he deliberately break the least of God's commandments, " he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." And the greater were his former attainments in faith, the more inexcusable is his present apostacy, the greater the offence it must cause to Christ's little ones, and, in every point of view, the more aggravated his infidelity.

" Take heed," therefore, " brethren, lest there be in any of *you* an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God ;" for be assured that such a heart can never be in any one, without the fault of his own perverse will. The devil, it is true, is most active and insidious in his attempts

<sup>3</sup> 1 Tim. v. 8.

thus to withdraw our hearts from God, and to “convert the things that should have been for our wealth into an occasion of falling;” but we may be sure he would not be permitted to tempt us at all, were it not for the purpose of shielding us from some greater, and otherwise inevitable evil; and we have the promise of God himself, that “he will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, but will, with the temptation, also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it.”<sup>4</sup> Whenever, therefore, a man is betrayed by the tempter into unbelief or unrighteousness, it is through his own willingness to be deceived, and through his proneness to transgression, that the temptation is rendered effectual. For the same Scriptures which warn us of the power of the Devil, assure us, that if we “resist him, he will flee from us;”<sup>5</sup> and that God will enable us to be “more than conquerors, through him that loved us.”<sup>6</sup> Wherefore St. James exhorts us, to “count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations, knowing this, that the trying of our faith worketh patience;”<sup>7</sup> and again, he saith, “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. x. 13.

<sup>5</sup> James, iv. 7.

<sup>6</sup> Rom. viii. 37.

<sup>7</sup> James, i. 2, 3.

shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.”<sup>8</sup>

“ Now unto Him that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy ; to the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion, and power, both now and for ever.—Amen.”

<sup>8</sup> James, i. 12.



## DISCOURSE V.

### ON BAPTISMAL REGENERATION.

Preached on the NATIVITY OF ST. JOHN BAPTIST, 1824.

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MATTHEW, III. 11.

*"I indeed baptise you with water unto repentance ; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear : He shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost and with fire."*

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THESE words indicate a great superiority, not only in the dignity and office in general, but also in the baptism of Christ to that of John, “ I indeed baptise you with water unto repentance ; but he shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.” The mention of *fire* is a manifest allusion to what was to take place on the day of Pentecost a few

years after ; as well as to the enlightening, purifying, animating effects of the Holy Ghost, upon all who are so happy as to feel and obey his influences. But there is nothing in this declaration of John, except it be contained in the very word *baptise*, to shew that *water* was to have any thing to do in the spiritual baptism about to be introduced by Christ. That point was, however, soon decided by the event ; for water was in fact employed<sup>1</sup> in all the baptisms which took place under the immediate directions of Christ, during his personal ministry on earth ; was declared by Christ, in his conversation with Nicodemus, to be for ever essential ;<sup>2</sup> and was accordingly appointed by Christ,<sup>3</sup> in his most solemn commission to his ministers, to be for ever continued in his church, as the outward and visible sign of the inward and Spiritual grace of baptism.

But the inward and Spiritual grace, the mystical washing away of the guilt, and other *natural* consequences of Adam's transgression, by the unperceived agency of the Holy Ghost, *so far* applying the benefits of Christ's Atonement to *every worthy* partaker of that holy ordinance—this being

<sup>1</sup> See John, iii. 22, 23, 26 ; and iv. 1, 2.      <sup>2</sup> John, iii. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Compare Matt. xxviii. 19, with Acts, viii. 36 ; and x. 47.

what raises the baptism of Christ so much above that of John, and above every other baptism, is most properly pointed out in the words of our Text as the great distinguishing characteristic of Christian baptism. In like manner, the inward ministration of the Spirit, which accompanies all the external ordinances of Christianity, renders the Christian ministry in general so much superior to the ministry of John, and every other ministry, that, though “ among them that are born of women there had not risen,” before him, “ a greater than John the Baptist ; notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he ;” that is, the lowest minister in the church of Christ exercises a higher and more holy office than his.

In confirmation of this view of the superiority of the Christian ministry in general, and of the Christian baptism in particular, above that of John, we may refer to the baptism of about three thousand souls on the great day of Pentecost, in compliance with the exhortation of Peter, who said unto them, “ Repent, and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, (<sup>P</sup>) for the remission of sins ; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Here the baptism of Jesus Christ is clearly proposed, as a means of obtaining, on re-

penitance, remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost, not only to those first converts, but to all who should at any time be called to the profession of Christianity. “For the promise,” added St. Peter, “is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”<sup>4</sup>

The necessary (<sub>B</sub>) connexion between the elemental and spiritual baptism is also apparent in the case of the first Gentile converts, Cornelius and his friends. Though, to remove all doubts from the Judaising mind of the Apostle, the Spirit vouchsafed in their case manifestly to lead the way, this was so far from rendering the administration of the water unnecessary, that it convinced Peter of the necessity of administering it. For when the Holy Ghost fell on them, and they began to speak with tongues and magnify God, “then remembered Peter the word of the Lord, how he said, John, indeed, baptised with water, but ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost.”<sup>5</sup> Whence the Apostle argued, “Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptised, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he

<sup>4</sup> Acts, ii. 38, 39.

<sup>5</sup> Acts, xi. 16.

commanded them to be baptised in the name of the Lord.”<sup>6</sup> This case, with the Apostle’s reasoning upon it, confirms in every point the inference we drew from the words of our Text; for it shews both that the gift of the Holy Ghost has an established connexion with the due administration of baptism in the Christian Church, and that it had no such connexion with the baptism of John.

This is farther confirmed by what we read in the nineteenth chapter of the same book of Acts, about the twelve disciples whom St. Paul found at Ephesus, and “ said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what, then, were ye baptised? (q) And they said, Unto John’s baptism. Then said Paul, John truly baptised with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. (p) And when Paul laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied.”

<sup>6</sup> Acts. x. 47, 48

Many other proofs might be adduced of the necessity and efficacy of baptism in the Christian Church, for receiving remission of sins and Spiritual regeneration ; but none is more satisfactory than that which is drawn from the circumstances of the conversion and baptism of St. Paul, as stated in the ixth and xxiid chapters of the Acts of the Apostles. (8)

Before Ananias came to him at Damascus, he was unquestionably a sincere convert, humbled before God in contrition, and fasting, and prayer, and earnestly desiring to know what his Lord would have him to do. The thing which Ananias was sent by the Lord to tell him that he must do, was “to be baptised ;” and the object of that baptism was expressly stated to be, that he might “wash away his sins,” and “be filled with the Holy Ghost.” With all the dispositions necessary to make him worthy to be a member of the Christian covenant, Paul<sup>7</sup> “was not actually in possession of the blessings of that covenant, because he had not actually made himself a Christian, by submission to the ceremonial ordinance of baptism. The grace of the Gospel was suspended upon the

<sup>7</sup> Benson on Baptism, Discourse II.

administration of a sacrament ; and before his baptism, he had neither washed away his sins, nor been filled with the Holy Ghost. That measure of the Spirit which was necessary to enable him to fulfil the conditions antecedent to baptism ; the grace of repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, it cannot be denied that he had already," to a certain extent, " received ; for he both repented and believed ; and we know that 'we are not sufficient of ourselves to do any thing as of ourselves ; but our sufficiency is of God.' But a greater measure of the Spirit was given him at his baptism than he had enjoyed before ; a measure sufficient to enable him to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ ;" to bring effectually home to his own conscience, to feel his own individual concern in every article of the Christian faith,<sup>8</sup> and to fulfil to the utmost the various duties which are consequent upon baptism. " He was '*filled* with the Holy Ghost,' so far as he was either capable of receiving or of using his gifts, and," after having duly profited by these gifts for his own edification and instruction, " ' straightway he preached Christ in the syna-

<sup>8</sup> See pp. 70—72.

gogues that he is the Son of God, and increased the more in strength, proving that this is the very Christ." The effects of baptism upon St. Paul may therefore be very accurately described in the words by which our church has defined the nature of a sacrament. It was the outward and visible sign of the remission of his sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost; and though not the *reason* for which, yet the *means* by which he received the same, and a pledge to assure him thereof."

The connexion between the ceremonial ordinance and Spiritual effects of baptism is less apparent in the case of the other apostles; who were "baptised with water," before the solemn sacramental institution of baptism to be a perpetual ordinance in the Christian Church, and "baptised with the Holy Ghost," on the day of Pentecost, ten days after our Lord's Ascension into heaven.

It may indeed be argued, that the regeneration of the Apostles, took place on our Lord's first appearance to them after his resurrection; when "he breathed on them, and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost;" and at the same time, "opened their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures." But his whole address to them on that occasion, (which may be collected by passing from

the 23d verse of the 20th chapter of St. John, to the 15th verse of the last chapter of St. Luke,) particularly the last words which each Evangelist has recorded of that address, shews that it was not regeneration the Apostles then received, but Ministerial ordination ; which, with the power of transmitting it to posterity, it was meet they should receive directly and personally from Christ himself, who is the Head of the Church. They were not, however, allowed to enter immediately on the exercise of their sacred office ; but were first sent into Galilee, there to be instructed by Jesus himself in “ the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.” And after forty days of this precious discipline, when their master was about to leave them, he commanded them to “ tarry in the City of Jerusalem, till they should be endued with power from on high,”<sup>9</sup> assuring them, that he would send “ the promise of the Father” upon them ; “ for,” said he, “ John truly baptised with water; but ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.”<sup>1</sup> These words unanswerably prove that the Apostles did not receive the baptism with the Holy Ghost till after our Lord’s Ascension.

<sup>9</sup> Luke, xxiv. 49.

<sup>1</sup> Acts, i. 5.

But ten days after that event, “when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all, with one accord, in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”<sup>2</sup> Though the gift of tongues was the most striking and immediately observable, it was by no means the most important effect of the Spirit upon these first members and ministers of the Christian Church. The Spirit which descended upon them on the day of Pentecost was, emphatically, a Spirit of Comfort, to support them under all the sufferings and calamities that could possibly befall them in this world, by placing before their eyes a clear and distinct prospect of the glory and happiness of the next, and *enabling each of them to see the way, by which he might secure those inestimable rewards for himself.* And as consequences of this general character, it was a Spirit of Charity, disposing them to love another for His sake, who so

<sup>2</sup> Acts, ii. 1—4

loved every one of them that he laid down his life for their redemption : a Spirit of Humility, teaching them to disregard all the pomps, and vanities, and advantages of this world, after the example of Him, who, though he was Lord of all, was meek and lowly in heart, made himself of no reputation, and humbled himself even to the death of the Cross for us miserable sinners. It was, moreover, a Spirit of Truth, which taught them all things, as Christ had promised, and brought all things to their remembrance whatsoever he had said unto them ; guiding them at the same time into all truth, by dispelling from their minds the clouds of ignorance and carnal prejudice, and shewing them the true spiritual import of every word he had uttered, and the true nature of the kingdom he had come to establish upon earth, the extension and administration of which were now delegated to them. Nor, weak, and blind, and cowardly as they had lately been, were they any longer unequal to so high, and difficult, and dangerous a charge. For the Spirit which visibly descended upon them, was also a Spirit of Power and of Fortitude—of power, to confirm the doctrines they were commissioned to preach, by miracles and signs—and of fortitude, if possible, still more miraculous : for those same disciples,

who, a few weeks before, had trembled, and fled, and denied their master; who had been scattered every one to his own, and left him alone in the time of danger and of suffering; those same disciples now openly proclaim the Divinity of Jesus of Nazareth, who had so lately been buffeted, and spit upon, and nailed to the cross. They profess their faith in a crucified Redeemer in the face of all the people, even in the presence of those princes and rulers who had been the promoters of his crucifixion; whose commands of silence they regard not, whose threats and punishments they despise, and whom they boldly accuse of having dipped their sacrilegious hands in the blood of the Son of God.

Much of the error and controversy, which exist on the subject of the New Birth, has arisen from not sufficiently attending to the wide and manifest difference between the case of these first-born of the Spirit and that of ordinary Christians. The wisdom and goodness of God induce him to act by general rules in the spiritual as well as in the natural world; nor does he ever deviate from those rules, except when such deviation is conducive to great and beneficial purposes. But whenever there is an adequate cause of this description, He who

ordained the laws of nature and of spiritual agency, can suspend or alter them at pleasure, as the records of Scripture bear ample testimony that he frequently has, in the one case and in the other. Now, if ever there were persons who required a greater strength and variety, and a more rapid acquirement of spiritual gifts than God had destined for the generality of Christians, they were the Apostles and first ministers of the church, who were to go forth to all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature ; having to contend, not only against the prejudices and perverseness of ordinary men, but against principalities, against powers, against spiritual wickedness in high places ; having to bear up, not only against the severest labours, difficulties, and privations, but against the most cruel mockings and scourgings, against bonds and imprisonment ; being stoned, tempted, slain with the sword, destitute, afflicted, tormented. Accordingly we find, that, to prepare them for the fiery trial which was to try them, they were endued with miraculous powers and extraordinary graces, and were brought forth at once in all the strength and vigour of spiritual manhood.

A similar departure from what experience has since shewn to be the ordinary rules of spiritual

agency, is also conspicuous in the case of St. Paul ; and is observable, in different degrees, in most of the instances of early conversions recorded in Scripture. “ To one was given by the Spirit the word of wisdom ; to another, the word of knowledge by the same Spirit ; to another, faith by the same Spirit ; to another, the gifts of healing by the same Spirit ; to another, the working of miracles ; to another, prophecy ; to another, discerning of spirits ; to another, divers kinds of tongues ; to another, the interpretation of tongues : But all these worked that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he willed,”<sup>5</sup> according to the exigencies of their situations, and the parts they were to have in the propagation of the Gospel. These, however, were extraordinary gifts, which, though they sometimes, as in the case of the Apostles, accompanied the New Birth, yet formed no essential part of it, and were generally conferred after it, by the imposition of the Apostles’ hands.

But when, by means of the astonishing power, wisdom, zeal, patience, courage, and other excellent qualities that were conferred by the Spirit upon these primitive saints, confessors, and martyrs,

<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 8—11.

the Christian Church had extended her influence over the most powerful empires of the world; when, instead of having to contend against principalities and powers, kings had become her nursing fathers, and queens her nursing mothers; these miraculous displays of spiritual power were no longer necessary for her support. God, therefore, who never does any thing in vain, no longer conferred upon men these extraordinary gifts; which had been most useful before, but now, having no suitable field of exertion, would probably have done more harm than good, by gendering strife and spiritual pride; as we find they sometimes did, even in the days of St. Paul, who rebukes the Corinthians for their abuse of such gifts.<sup>4</sup>

Still, however, the promise of God in Christ Jesus remains, that his Spirit shall “ abide with us for ever;” and, according to his declaration to Nicodemus, it still is, and ever must be, impossible for a man to enter into the kingdom of heaven, “ except he be born again.” *In what, then, does the New Birth now consist?* This is a question, at the true solution of which we are much concerned to arrive; and with a view to which I have entered so

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 26—30.

fully into the case of the Apostles ; for it appears to me that the most satisfactory solution of it is to be obtained by considering, first, in what respects our regeneration agrees, and then in what respects it differs from that of the Apostles.

The regeneration of every one must agree with that of the Apostles, in all that is necessary to render him capable of entering into the kingdom of God ; in all that is essential to the truth and propriety of that figurative appellation which was chosen by the Son of God, as giving the most accurate idea of its nature that could be conveyed by the imperfect medium of human language. It must agree with that of the Apostles, therefore, in being a transition from a state of spiritual darkness into light ; a deliverance from that spiritual death, which passed upon all men by Adam's transgression ; and a *commencement* of that spiritual life, which has been restored by Jesus Christ.

But this, like *the mystical washing away of sin*, is a very general description of the effects of regeneration. Let us endeavour, therefore, to ascertain more particularly what it is that the Spirit doeth for us, by inquiring what change he produces *in us* when we are born again ; what new quality or ca-

pacity he then confers upon us, which by nature we cannot have, and without which we cannot enter into the kingdom of God, but must ever remain in a state of spiritual darkness and spiritual death. The conversation of our Lord with Nicodemus furnishes us with this important information also ; thus at once declaring the necessity of regeneration, and explaining in what it consists. For Christ there twice assures us, that “ whosoever *believeth* in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.” Whether, therefore, you consider the kingdom of God as denoting the visible church on earth, or the invisible church in heaven, it is manifest that who-soever believeth in the Son of God is qualified to enter therein. But “ except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Whosoever, therefore, truly and fully believeth in our Lord Jesus Christ has been born again ; and Christian faith, or the power of attaining to it, is the great qualification then conferred upon us, by which we are enabled to pass from death into life. This inference is solemnly confirmed by our Lord himself in another place. “ Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and *believeth* on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not

come into condemnation, but *is passed from death unto life.*"<sup>5</sup>

The faith to which these happy effects are ascribed is, be it remembered, true Christian faith. Not that *general* assent of the understanding with which "the devils also (who know that Jesus is 'the Holy One of God') believe and tremble,"<sup>6</sup> but that *particular* application, that reception into the heart, which can exist in none but a Christian, who knows, not only that Jesus is the Holy One of God, but that he himself is one of those for whom the blood of that Holy One was shed upon the Cross. This is that faith which "is the gift of God;"<sup>7</sup> for "no man can" thus "say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost,"<sup>8</sup> who "regenerateth us to a lively hope,"<sup>9</sup> by conferring upon us the power of attaining to this faith, and thus becoming Sons of God. Before he passes through the "Laver of Regeneration," an adult person may have grace to be heartily sorry for his sins, and earnestly desirous of partaking of the benefits of that atonement, which he firmly believes the Son of God to have made for the sins of mankind. But it is not till, by complying with Christ's

<sup>5</sup> John, v. 24.      <sup>6</sup> James, ii. 19.      <sup>7</sup> Ephes. ii. 8.

<sup>8</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 3.      <sup>9</sup> 1 Pet. i. 3.

ordination, he has been admitted into the church, that he is in a condition to feel himself actually in possession of those benefits, and so attain to that true and lively faith, which worketh by love, and produces *unreserved* obedience to all the commandments of God.<sup>1</sup>

Having now seen in what respect our Spiritual birth agrees, let us next consider in what it differs from that of the Apostles.

One difference has already been pointed out, namely, the absence of these miraculous endowments which *accompanied*, but did not, I conceive, form part of the *regeneration* of the Apostles; which were necessary at first to secure the triumph of Christianity over the persecuting malice of its enemies ; but which, in times of tranquillity, were not required for the safety of actual Christians, or the conversion of others, and would probably have been more prejudicial than advantageous to the persons who possessed them.

The other difference, which has also been in some measure anticipated, is of a similar nature, and may be similarly accounted for. The Apostles,

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 70—73, and 83.

who had enjoyed extraordinary advantages of nurture during the lengthened period of their preceding spiritual existence, no sooner came to the birth than they burst forth, in all the strength and vigour of spiritual manhood; and many of the early converts seem likewise to have attained at once to considerable degrees of maturity in Christ. This was required by the exigencies of the Church in those days of persecution and blood, and must have had an excellent effect in convincing others, by the sudden and striking change produced in those who had embraced the Gospel. But it was contrary to God's usual mode of proceeding, the grand characteristic of whose operations is the production of important effects, by uniform, unobserved, imperceptible degrees. As soon, therefore, as the church was sufficiently established to maintain her ground by the agency of more ordinary means, God hastened to put an end to this anomaly in his spiritual kingdom.

Nor had it ever been admitted farther than was absolutely necessary. The rapid progress made by the early converts, in Christian faith, may in a great measure be naturally accounted for by the stimulating circumstances in which they were

placed, and by the advantages which many of them, as well as the Apostles, enjoyed before regeneration, in that state of spiritual existence which corresponds to the life of an infant in the womb. St. Paul, who had not enjoyed those previous advantages, was not qualified to appear as a Christian teacher till about three years after his baptism; but, as we learn from the beginning of his Epistle to the Galatians, when he had been called and baptised, “*immediately* he conferred not with flesh and blood, neither went up to Jerusalem—but went into Arabia, and,” having there become qualified, by searching the Scriptures and other spiritual discipline, for the office to which he was called, he “returned again to Damascus;”<sup>2</sup> and then it was that, as we read in the Acts, he “was certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus, (s) and straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.”<sup>3</sup> We read also in the New Testament of *babes* in Christ, who were fed with the pure *milk* of the word; who, by diligent application of the appointed means, *grew* in grace, and advanced from strength to strength, to-

<sup>2</sup> Gal. i. 16, 17.

<sup>3</sup> Acts, ix. 19, 20.

wards the state of *perfect men*, the *measure of the stature* of the fulness of Christ.

This description answers exactly to the case of every one, who, in these present days, having been born of the Spirit, continues therein. The New Birth, being the *commencement* of his spiritual life, does not conduct him at once to maturity; but simply removes from him the incapacity under which he lay before, of attaining to any measure of *true Christian faith*, and brings him within reach of those means of grace, by the due use of which he may go on from strength to strength, daily advancing in all virtue and godliness of living; and thus secure to himself a happy transition from the kingdom of God on earth, to his glorious and eternal kingdom in heaven. But if the spiritual child be not fed with the sincere milk of the word, and other spiritual nurture, the *daily bread* of the soul, which our Father in heaven freely gives to all who duly ask for it, he may sicken, pine, and die. In short, the spiritual or inner man is subject to similar vicissitudes of sickness and health with the body, according to the neglect or attention that is paid to its proper nourishment and support.

With respect to the *time when* the New Birth

takes place, we have shewn that, as our church declares, it takes place in *baptism*. If any one ask, What connexion there can be between the outward washing of the body and the purifying of the soul from the stain of sin? we answer, Simply that which our Lord has seen fit to make, by so joining them together, that the one, when duly administered and received according to his institution, should always be accompanied by the other.

That they have been so joined together by Christ, has been already shewn in this Discourse. It is likewise apparent from that passage in the Epistle to the Romans, where it is written, "We are buried with him by baptism unto *death*; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in *Newness of Life*."<sup>4</sup> Surely, my brethren, there must have been some connexion in the Apostle's mind between this *Newness of Life* and the *New Birth*; and it is scarcely possible we can be mistaken in considering that connexion to be, that as the *natural birth* is the *commencement of the natural life*, so the *New Birth* is the *commencement of Newness of Life*. But it is by *baptism* we are bu-

<sup>4</sup> Rom. iv. 4.

ried unto death, that we may thenceforth walk in Newness of Life. Baptism, therefore, is the means by which we are enabled to begin to walk in Newness of Life, that is, by which we obtain the New Birth.

The same inference may also be drawn from our Lord's conversation with the ruler of the Jews, from which, as we have before learnt<sup>5</sup> the necessity and the nature of regeneration, so we may also learn the time when it takes place. Nicodemus having requested an explanation of what our Lord meant when he so solemnly declared, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” “Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” These latter words being an explanation of the former, it follows, that *to be born again is to be born of water and of the Spirit*; that is, the New Birth takes place in baptism, wherein the water, being used according to Christ's institution, is always accompanied by the benign, though unperceived cleansing of the Spirit. And so far are we from having any ground

<sup>5</sup> See pp. 91 and 93.

to expect that the Spirit will ever act *in the work of Regeneration*, without the employment of water, that the New Birth is declared by our Lord to depend upon the one as much as the other.

I trust I never shall again be induced to trespass so long upon the patience of any congregation; but the doctrine of baptismal regeneration is one of great importance and difficulty; and I have allowed myself to enter into it so much at large on the present occasion, because I shall have no opportunity of resuming the subject for four months to come, having already continued these Lectures beyond the customary day of closing them for the season. I have endeavoured, with as much brevity as was consistent with clearness, to state and confirm from Scripture, what, in exact conformity with the standards of the Church of England, (†) I conceive to be the true view of the doctrine, without noticing any of the popular objections against it.

Most of those objections proceed from an *assumption*, that regeneration gives a certainty of final salvation, which cannot be true; for St. Paul, in an Epistle addressed, not to all the Philippians, but to "the saints in Christ which are at Phi-

lippi,”<sup>6</sup> “ partakers with him of grace ;”<sup>7</sup> in whom the Holy Ghost had “ begun a good work,” which the Apostle was “ confident he would perform until the day of Jesus Christ.”<sup>8</sup> Writing, I say, to these holy men, whom he certainly considered (as St. Peter did the chosen sojourners of the dispersion) to be regenerate, or “ begotten again to a lively hope,”<sup>9</sup> St. Paul, notwithstanding, exhorts them to “ work out their own salvation with fear and trembling,”<sup>1</sup> urging the inestimable value and sole efficacy of the spiritual grace they were partakers of, as the very reason why they should be so tremblingly careful to make a good use of it. “ Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling ; *for* it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do, of his good pleasure.” And by this very principle St. Paul regulated his own conduct ; for though he doubtless had been born again, so far was he from being sure of final salvation, that, to the very last, he wrought it out with fear and trembling, “ keeping under his body, and bringing it into subjection, lest by any means,

<sup>6</sup> Philip. i. 1.      <sup>7</sup> Philip. i. 7.      <sup>8</sup> Philip. i. 6.

<sup>9</sup> 1 Pet. i. 3.      <sup>1</sup> Philip. ii. 12.

when he had preached to others, he himself should be a cast-away.”<sup>2</sup>

Another class of objections against the necessity and efficacy of Christian baptism are deprived of all their force by the plain and obvious principle, that whatever terms are proposed in Scripture as necessary to salvation, *are proposed to those to whom they are proposed*, that is, to those who live in a Christian country, and have the means of learning, and the power of complying with the terms required.

This same principle also removes a most popular objection against the condemning clauses of the Athanasian Creed. Add to this another principle equally undeniable, namely, that it is a *Creed*, and all the common arguments against it immediately fall to the ground. A Creed is a summary confession of *faith*, an abstract, or statement of doctrines, which are *believed* to be contained in the Bible. The *Creed* of St. Athanasius, therefore, professes not to state any thing which the Church of England decides on her own authority to be true; but professes, in every clause, to state what she *believes to be the doctrine of Scripture*. And the

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. ix. 27.

greater are the terrors of any doctrine contained in Scripture, the more dangerous it is for any one concerned to remain ignorant of it, and, therefore, surely not the less incumbent on the church to provide for its being clearly and faithfully brought before them.

Keep these principles continually in view, and proceed with due caution, diligence, and humility, in the investigation of Divine truth; and I am persuaded you will soon see the futility of all objections against the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, with which we have now been occupied, and against the doctrines contained in the Athanasian creed, which have occupied our attention in four preceding Discourses. And, as grace has been given to us this day, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and, in the power of the Divine majesty, to worship the Unity; so let us daily beseech God that he would be pleased to keep us steadfast in this faith, and evermore defend us from all adversities which might impede our progress to those happy mansions, where, if we arrive, we shall join the ecstatic chorus “of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues,” who stand before the

throne and before the Lamb, and cry with a loud voice, ascribing “ salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.”—“ Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God, for ever and ever—Amen.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Rev. vii. 9—12.



## **APPENDIX.**



## NOTES.

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(A) P. 6.—*The falsehood of their versions.*

As it may fairly be presumed, that every one who can read Greek has ready access to a Greek Testament ; and these Notes are intended chiefly for the use of persons who cannot ; I shall abstain, as much as possible, from the introduction of Greek words, lest the sight of those unknown symbols should deter any from reading such appeals to the original language, as are rendered necessary by the industrious propagation of Hyper-Socinian delusions in the parish with which I have hitherto been most nearly connected, and in whose spiritual welfare I must ever feel the most lively interest. Should I be induced, in a few instances, to consult the convenience of the Greek student, or to avoid a clumsy circumlocution, by putting down a Greek word or phrase, those who are unacquainted with the characters will find no difficulty thus introduced. The utmost notice I shall ever require them to take of such words is, occasionally, when two of them stand near together, to observe that they are *different* words. In other cases, they have only to read straight on, without taking any notice of the Greek ; or, if the

sentence require it, to substitute "*the Greek word*," or "*phrase*," in the place of the unknown symbols.

Of the versions by which Anti-Trinitarians have tried to destroy the force of the words, "Thought it not robbery to be equal with God," the following have fallen in my way.

1. "Thought not of the robbery of being equal with God."
2. "Did not arrogate (or lay claim to) any equality with God."
3. "Did not catch at, or vehemently desire to be equal with God."
4. "Did not think he ought to make an ostentatious display of his resemblance to God."

Of course, none of these renderings will avail them, till they have first made good the assertion of their champion, Belsham, and his associates, that the preceding expression, "being in the form of God," implies merely an *external resemblance*, an *appearance to the sight*; and shewn how it can be applied to Christ, as he existed upon earth; that is, how the Man of Sorrows, who "was without form or comeliness," and who, "when we saw him, had no beauty that we should desire him," can be truly said to have had an external resemblance to God, which *appeared to the sight*. The Anti-Trinitarians profess to banish all mystery from religion; but surely here is a mystery of their own creation. And, in order to get rid of one great mystery relating to the nature of the Deity, whom it is manifest no finite being can ever find out to perfection, they create thousands such as this, relating to human language as applied to *earthly occurrences*, which are completely within the grasp of human intellect, and concerning which there ought to be no mystery at all.

But, supposing them to have proved the truth of this wonderful paradox, and so to have convinced the world,

that by Christ's "*being in the form of God*," is meant *that he was nothing more than man*; still any person of sound understanding, without knowing a word of Greek, might see that none of the three first of the above quoted renderings of the words that follow can be true. The Apostle's declared object is to exhibit Jesus as a pattern of humility and freedom from self-love; and according to these glosses, the first instance he produces of those virtues is, that *being nothing but a mere man, he did not claim or aspire to equality with God*. There is no danger of our adversaries' persuading any sober-minded Christian, that the inspired Apostle could talk such nonsense as this. They must first subvert the whole fabric of revelation, by shewing, as they labour so hard to do, that inspiration gave no security from *mischiefous error*, and establish their blasphemous assertion, that the *inspired penman*, St. Paul, is a very blundering theologian and inconclusive reasoner. It is unnecessary to bring forward any separate argument against the fourth of the above versions; for even if the words of the original could be tortured into that meaning, (and I shall shew they cannot,) it would, as we have seen, avail the Socinians nothing, except they could first satisfy the world, that *the despised Nazarene had a resemblance to God, which had nothing to do with internal nature or essence, but which was altogether external and apparent to the sight*.

As to their connexion with the original, the first of the four is the only one that has even the appearance of a *translation*; and it affords a very fair specimen of the fidelity of Socinian translators in general. The word *γνωστος* is very properly rendered in our Bibles by the word "thought," that is, judged, esteemed, considered, or held (in opinion); but it never does, nor can signify "thought

of," that is, meditated or devised, as it is made to do in that false version. The other three are more like glosses or paraphrases than translations, and are founded upon pretended metaphorical meanings of the word *ἀεπαγκός*, the literal meaning of which is allowed, on all hands, to be "robbery," an act of theft or dishonest violence, or a thing acquired by such means. The true *literal* translation of the clause, therefore, is, "Thought it not robbery (or usurpation) to be equal with God."

The only *metaphorical* interpretation for which I have seen any sound authority, seems to be founded on a thievish proverb, still current in the world, that "Stolen things are sweet, or precious." In the state of society which so long ago existed in Greece, similar to that of the Scottish Border a few generations back, every one valued himself most upon those possessions which had been acquired by predatory acts of theft or violence. Hence *ἀεπαγκά*, a thing acquired by predatory theft or violence, would naturally come to signify a thing upon which the possessor valued or prided himself; and, in process of time, would be used in this latter sense, without any regard to the manner in which the thing had been acquired. Extending this figurative sense to the cognate word *ἀεπαγκός*, the first part of our text might be thus rendered—"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought not (even) his *being* (not merely appearing) like or (more literally) equal to God, a thing to value or pride himself upon; but made himself of no reputation," &c.<sup>1</sup> The metaphorical

<sup>1</sup> The three passages quoted by Whitby from Heliodorus, but not, I think, correctly explained by him, are strong confirmations of this interpretation; which is the same as that of Theodoret, a learned GREEK father of the fifth century.

interpretation, therefore, is, in truth, more fatal to the Socinians than the literal ; but finding that it may have a metaphorical sense, they take occasion to twist and torture the passage into any form that suits their purpose, in pursuance of the laudable design before mentioned, of banishing all mystery from the *doctrines* of Scripture, though it be at the expense of involving in impenetrable mystery the *meaning of every word*.

How striking is the contrast between the laboured, mystical, deceitful glosses of the Socinian versions, or rather *perversions*, of Holy Scripture, and the honest, un-designing simplicity of our own excellent Translation. Few and unimportant are the instances in which it fails to give the exact sense of the original, in the plainest and best words that the English language affords ; nor have I ever met with an instance in which the translators appear to have been influenced by the slightest desire to favour or disfavour any particular tenet by their mode of rendering a particular passage. Their whole conduct is marked by an earnest desire to unfold the truth, and so to acquit themselves of the awfully responsible duty imposed upon them, that they might, on the great day of account, be able to “take you,” their fellow-countrymen, “to record, that they are pure from the blood of all, not having shunned,” but earnestly endeavoured, clearly and truly, “to declare unto you all the counsel of God.”<sup>2</sup> Whenever there was a doubt or difference of opinion among them, as to which of two ways of rendering a particular word or phrase would convey the meaning best to an English reader, they printed both, one in the text

<sup>2</sup> Acts, xx. 26, 27.

and the other in the margin. The marginal readings are almost always the most literal translations ; and it is much to be regretted, and may be doubted whether it be quite legal, that Bibles should ever be printed without them, or without the marginal references of the original translators.

To the united learning, industry, and caution of forty-seven of the best divines and linguists that this country has ever produced, we are indebted, under Providence, for the most faithful translation of the Scriptures that exists in any modern language. It is free from all wilful corruptions, as well as from every sort of error that can mislead an honest mind in matters of importance to salvation ; for which we can never be sufficiently grateful to God, who enabled them to make it so far faultless. But to say that it is altogether faultless, or free from errors of every description, would be to claim for the translators as high a degree of inspiration as that which guided the original penmen of Holy Writ. As men, they were liable to errors of judgment ; and I think they have committed one in their mode of expressing Philippians, ii. 7, in our Text, where they have fallen into a fault, by no means common with them, of not making the translation sufficiently close ; and thus, though they have not altered the meaning, they have impaired the spirit and clearness of the original. Many of my readers will be obliged to me for bringing them acquainted with the following *demonstration* of the pre-existence and Divinity of our Saviour, from Bishop Pearson's Exposition of the Creed, vol. i. pp. 198-202, in which the more correct rendering of the said verse is also shewn.

“ He who was subsisting in the form of God, and

thought himself to be equal with God, (in which thought he could not be deceived, nor be injurious to God,) must, of necessity, be truly and essentially God ; because there can be no equality between the Divine Essence, which is infinite, and any other whatsoever, which must be finite. But this is true of Christ, and that antecedently to his conception in the Virgin's womb, and existence in his human nature. For *being* (or rather *subsisting*) *in the form of God*, *he thought it not robbery to be equal with God* ; but emptied himself, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, (Phil. ii. 6, 7.) Out of which words naturally result three propositions, fully demonstrating our assertion. First, that Christ was in the form of a servant as soon as he was made man. Secondly, that he was in the form of God before he was in the form of a servant. Thirdly, that he was as much in the form of God, that is, did as truly and really subsist in the Divine nature, as in the form of a servant, or in the nature of man.

“ It is a vain imagination that our Saviour then first appeared a servant, when he was apprehended, bound, scourged, crucified. For they were not all slaves which ever suffered these indignities, or died that death ; and when they did, their death did not make, but find them, or suppose them servants. Besides, our Saviour, in all the degrees of his humiliation, never lived as a servant unto any master upon earth. It is true, he was subject at first, but as a son, to his reputed father and undoubted mother. When he appeared in public, he lived after the manner of a Prophet and a Doctor sent from God, accompanied with a family, as it were, of his Apostles, whose Master he professed himself ; subject to the commands of no man in that office, and obedient only to God.

The *form*, then, *of a servant*, which *he took upon him*, must consist in something distinct from his sufferings, or submission unto men, being the condition in which he was when he so submitted and so suffered. In that he was *made flesh*. sent in the likeness of sinful flesh,<sup>3</sup> subject unto all infirmities and miseries of this life, attending on the sons of men fallen by the sin of Adam : In that he was *made of a woman*, *made under the law*,<sup>4</sup> and so obliged to perform the same, which law did so handle the children of God, as that they differed nothing from servants: In that he was born, bred, and lived in a mean, low, and abject condition ; *as a root out of a dry ground*, *he had no form nor comeliness* ; and when we saw him, *there was no beauty that we should desire him* ; but was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief:<sup>5</sup> In that he was thus made man, he took upon him the form of a servant. Which is not mine, but the Apostle's explication ; as adding it, not by way of conjunction, in which there might be some diversity, but by way of apposition, which signifieth a clear identity. And therefore it is necessary to observe, that our translation of that verse is not only not exact, but very disadvantageous to that truth which is contained in it. For we read it thus—*But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.* Where we have two copulative conjunctions, neither of which is in the original text, and three distinct propositions, without any dependence of one upon the other ; whereas all the words together are but an expression of Christ's exinanition, with an explication, shewing in what it consisteth ; which

<sup>3</sup> Rom. viii. 3.<sup>4</sup> Gal. iv. 4.<sup>5</sup> Isa. liii. 2, 3.

will clearly appear by this literal translation, *But emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men.* Where, if any man doubt how Christ emptied himself, the text will satisfy him, by *taking the form of a servant*; if any still question how he took the form of a servant, he hath the Apostle's resolution, by *being made in the likeness of men.* Indeed, after the expression of this exinanition, he goes on with a conjunction, to add another act of Christ's humiliation: *And being found in fashion as a man, being already, by his exinanition, in the form of a servant, or the likeness of men, he humbled himself, and became (or, rather, becoming) obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.* As, therefore, his humiliation consisted in his obedience unto death, so his exinanition consisted in the assumption of the form of a servant, and that in the nature of man. All which is very fitly expressed by a strange interpretation," (i. e. a foreign, separate, or distinct interpretation, written without any thought of this passage,) "in the Epistle to the Hebrews. For whereas these words are clearly in the Psalmist, *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, mine ears hast thou opened;*<sup>6</sup> the Apostle appropriateth the sentence to Christ, *When he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me.*<sup>7</sup> Now, being the boring of the ear, under the law, was a note of perpetual servitude;<sup>8</sup> being this was expressed in the words of the Psalmist, and changed by the Apostle into the preparing of a body; it followeth, that when Christ's body

<sup>6</sup> Ps. xl. 6.

<sup>7</sup> Heb. x. 5.

<sup>8</sup> Exod. xxi. 6, and Deut. xv. 17.

first was framed, even then did he assume the form of a servant.

“ Again, it appeareth out of the same text, that Christ was in the form of God before he was in the form of a servant, and, consequently, before he was made man. For Christ is first expressly said to be in the form of God, and being so, to think it no robbery to be equal with God, and, notwithstanding that equality, to take upon himself the form of a servant, therefore it cannot be denied that was before in the form of God. Beside, he was not in the form of a servant, but by emptying himself, and all exinanition necessarily presupposeth a precedent plenitude ; it being as impossible to empty any thing which hath no fulness, as to fill any thing which hath no emptiness. But the fulness which Christ had, in respect whereof, assuming the form of a servant, he is said to empty himself, could be in nothing else but in the form of God, in which he was before. Wherefore, if the assumption of the form of a servant be contemporary with his exinanition ; if that exinanition necessarily presupposeth a plenitude as indispensably antecedent to it ; if the form of God be also coæval with that precedent plenitude, then must we confess, Christ was in the form of God before he was in the form of a servant ; which is the second proposition.

“ Again, it is evident from the same Scripture, that Christ was as much in the form of God as in the form of a servant, and did as really subsist in the Divine nature, as in the nature of man. For he was so *in the form of God*, as thereby *to BE equal with God*. But no other form beside the essential, which is the Divine nature itself, could infer an equality with God. *To whom*

*will ye liken me, or shall I be equal ? saith the Holy One.<sup>9</sup>* There can be but one infinite, eternal, and independent Being ; and there can be no comparison between that and whatsoever is finite, temporal, and depending. He, therefore, who did truly think himself equal with God, as being in the form of God, must be considered to subsist in that one infinite, eternal, and independent nature of God. Again, the phrase, *in the form of God*, not elsewhere mentioned, is used by the Apostle with respect to that other, of *the form of a servant*, exegetically continued *in the likeness of men* ; and the respect of one unto the other is so necessary, that if the form of God be not as real and essential as the form of a servant or the likeness of man, there is no force in the Apostle's words, nor will his arguments be fit to work any great degree of humiliation upon the consideration of Christ's exinanition. But by the *form* is certainly understood the true condition of a servant, and by the *likeness* infallibly meant the real nature of a man ; nor does the *fashion*, in which he was found, destroy, but rather assert the truth of his humanity. And, therefore, as sure as Christ was really and essentially man, of the same nature with us, in whose similitude he was made ; so certainly was he also really and essentially God, of the same nature and being with Him, in whose form he did subsist.

" Seeing, then, we have clearly evinced, from the express words of St. Paul, that Christ was in the form of a servant as soon as he was made man ; that he was in the form of God before he was in the form of a servant ; that the form of God in which he subsisted doth as truly signify the Divine, as the likeness of men the human nature ; it necessarily followeth, that Christ had a real ex-

<sup>9</sup> Isa. xl. 25, and xlvi. 5.

istence before he was begotten of the Virgin, and that the being which he had was the Divine essence, by which he was truly, really, and properly God."

The refusal of our adversaries to be distinguished by any name which we can concede to them, produces much inconvenience and embarrassment. We would not willingly quarrel about a name, nor call them by any name which they dislike ; but till they choose one by which they can fairly be distinguished from other denominations of *professing* Christians, we are obliged to continue the use of that by which they have been known for upwards of two centuries, and which they never, till lately, considered a term of reprobation, viz. Socinians. They insist upon being called UNITARIANS, an appellation which I, for one, can never concede to them ; for I am myself a Unitarian, and so was Bishop Pearson,\* and so is every person who holds the true Christian faith, as it is laid down in the Athanasian Creed. To allow an appellation, which *belongs* to the whole Christian world, to be *appropriated* as a distinguishing title by a few individuals, would be, not only to involve ourselves in endless confusion, but to sanction palpable dishonesty. And the dishonest use our adversaries make of the name thus dishonestly assumed, by triumphantly appealing to the proofs of the Divine Unity as proofs of their exclusive Unitarianism ; by falsely claiming illustrious individuals, now no more, as their partizans ; by publishing to the world that large bodies of men, (for example, in Ireland and America,) who actually hold their opinions in abhorrence, are Unitarians, meaning it to be understood in that restrictive sense in which they know it is not true ; and by deliberately planning, and endeavouring to avail

themselves of the laxity of the term, to decoy individuals and classes of men into their association, not doubting but contact with them will soon destroy whatever orthodox principles men may have when they join their ranks —these, and other dishonest practices,<sup>1</sup> by which they abuse their usurped name of Unitarians, shew that it is not only inconvenient and wrong, but also dangerous to permit that usurpation. Besides, they are not Unitarians, in the true sense of the word Unity, which speaks of the Union of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in the God-head. “The Lord our God is one God,” but not a solitary God. *They* maintain that he is solitary, and the words *one God*, in their mouths, mean always *a solitary God*. If, therefore, they wished to have a name which they could honestly call their own, they would take that of Solitarians. Or, since the only reason they give for disclaiming their old name of Socinians is, that Socinus did not go far enough in unbelief, why should they not call themselves Hyper-Socinians? I am glad to see that they do sometimes take the name of Anti-Trinitarians, which designates their blasphemy so fully and so exactly, that no one can dispute their claim to it; and therefore, I most willingly resolve to use it.

*False names, false versions, false deductions, false assertions,—*these compose the four main pillars of Anti-Trinitarianism. The preceding part of this note may suffice to give some idea of the nature of the two first species of falsehoods, and their mode of employing them. Of false deductions I select the following, from many very curious specimens that occur in a book, lately published at Alnwick, entitled, “Lectures on the Principles of Uni-

<sup>1</sup> For proofs of these dishonest practices, see Magee on Atonement, vol. ii. p. 802—823.

tarianism, by J. S. Hyndman, Minister of the Unitarian Chapel, Alnwick."

Having altered "the Word was God," John i. 1, to "God was the Word," this advocate for "the use of reason in religion" deduces the following most rational inference. "John, by saying that 'God was the Word,' teaches them that the Logos" (or the Word) "was not, as they supposed, an intelligent being." I do assure my readers that there is nothing either preceding or following this sentence which throws the least light upon its meaning ; so that, if it have any meaning, it must be, that, in the opinion of Mr. Hyndman, St. John (like a modern French philosopher) assumed, *as the basis of his system*, that God was not an intelligent being. I shall not insult my readers by extracting from Mr. Hyndman's heavy pages any more of the *mystical* blasphemies with which they abound, thus triumphantly confuting themselves.

He can, however, sometimes write an intelligible sentence ; and the following is no mean specimen of argumentative declamation. Referring to his text, John, xvi. 23, "In that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you"—He energetically exclaims, "The text, the very text, my brethren, proves that our sentiments, as Unitarians, with respect to the proper object of religious worship, are correct—wholly and undeniably correct. Let orthodox ingenuity be called into exercise, as it frequently is on other points, and what can it do to overthrow the firm foundation on which our principles rest? Speaking of the day in which he was to ascend into heaven, Jesus, in the most express terms, declares to his disciples, 'In that day ye shall ask me nothing ; whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my

name, he will give it you.' We regulate our worship according to this rule. We are therefore right, and of course the multitude must be wrong in worshipping him, who thus to his disciples declares that when removed from the sphere of sensible communication, they should ask him nothing. Where is there an express command to worship Jesus, as there is here an injunction not to worship him?"

I confess I was a little startled when I first discovered this brilliant passage. But recollecting the many powerful arguments which had led me to hold fast till now the doctrine of Christ's Divinity, and the spiritual comfort I had experienced from communing with him as God, neither my feelings nor my reason would permit me to forsake at once the God of my fathers, and bow down before the idol<sup>1</sup> of the Socinians, without farther examination. I determined, therefore, in the first place, to exercise a little "*orthodox ingenuity*" upon the text appealed to, for the purpose of ascertaining whether it really bore the meaning upon which this triumphant argument had been founded. Accordingly, I opened my Bible, in pursuance of an *orthodox* rule, which I strongly recom-

<sup>1</sup> "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true: and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. *This is the true God*, and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from *IDOLS*." 1 John, v. 20, 21. "The true God is He that was 'in Christ, reconciling the world to himself;' there is none other but He; and if this great characteristic be denied, or any other assumed in its stead, a man is left *without God*; after which he may call himself a *Deist*," or he may call himself a *Unitarian*, "if he will; but his God is a mere *IDOL* of the imagination, and has no corresponding reality in the whole universe of beings."—JONES's *Cath. Doct. of Trin.* p. lxxxvi.

mend to all who are desirous of knowing the truth, Never to decide upon any point of doctrine from a detached verse, till it has been carefully compared with the context. Reading from the beginning of the chapter, the first thing that struck me as bearing upon the text under consideration, was the use of the verb *ask* in the 5th, as again, in the 19th and 30th verses, in the sense of *asking a question, asking for information*. The following is my conclusion from the whole context, beginning at the xiiiith chapter.

Want of faith had prevented the Disciples from understanding<sup>2</sup> what Jesus had told them<sup>3</sup> respecting his approaching departure. Vague apprehensions of impending danger pressed heavily upon their spirits, while the degrading consciousness of spiritual blindness filled up the measure of their *sorrow*, (xvi. 6,) and made them ashamed to *ask* for clearer information, either in the first instance, by *repeating*<sup>4</sup> the question, Whither goest thou? (v. 5,) or afterwards, by *asking* the much *desired* explanation of the words, “A little while, and ye shall see me; and again a little while, and ye shall not see me.” (vv. 16-19.) Jesus, however, the *Divine* Jesus, “needed not that any should ask him, (v. 30;) but “knowing all things,” replied at once to their thoughts. In both instances, His object was, to encourage their hearts against the fear of the world, and to give them a *motive* to bear with patience their present distressing uncertainty about many things, the knowledge of which they were not yet able to bear (v. 12.) This *motive* was, in both instances, the same, viz. the prospect of having the veil removed from

<sup>2</sup> See xiii. 36, 37, and xiv. 5—11, 22.

<sup>3</sup> xiii. 31—33, and xiv. 2, 3, 19.      <sup>4</sup> xiii. 36, and xiv. 5.

their minds ; for, said he in the former case, “ When He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He shall guide you into all truth,” (v. 13) ; and in the latter, “ I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you,” (for “ I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”<sup>5</sup>) “ And in that day,” (or *time*,<sup>6</sup> viz. of enduring joy,) “ ye shall ask me nothing,” either verbally or (as on this occasion) mentally, so completely shall your present distressing ignorance have been removed, by my own personal instructions, (Acts, i. 3,) and by the illumination of the Spirit of Truth. Our Lord then proceeded to suggest a topic of encouragement against the fear of the world, different, or at least exhibited in a different point of view from that (viz. the promise of the Comforter, v. 7,) which he had employed in the former instance, and from that which he had “ now plainly spoken” (v. 29) in the present, (viz. the promise of an abiding joy from his own return, v. 22,) though all the three consisted in a promise of Divine protection. This third promise, as relating to “ his Father and their Father,” and being peculiarly adapted to remove their apprehensions of being left “ orphans,”<sup>7</sup> even for a single instant, he introduces, in his most solemn and impressive manner,<sup>8</sup> “ Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatso-

<sup>5</sup> Matt. xxviii. 20. <sup>6</sup> Compare c. xiv. 19, 20, and xvi. 25, 26.

<sup>7</sup> See ch. xiv. 18, margin.

<sup>8</sup> Our adversaries are capable of suggesting that this transition from one topic to another would not be made in the middle of a verse ; but few, I trust, are ignorant enough to be so misled. Christ did not speak in verses. The Evangelists did not write in verses. The division into chapters and verses is altogether arbitrary, and a modern invention, very convenient for the purpose of reference, and intended for that purpose alone.

ever ye shall ask the Father in my name, He will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name ; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." The same two promises, of clear instruction, (v. 25,) and of a favourable and affectionate answer to all their faithful prayers, (verses 26, 27,) Christ immediately reiterated in other words, more fully, but in the same order as in verse 23 ; thus strongly confirming our interpretation of that verse.

If any doubt remained of the soundness of that interpretation, it would vanish at once when we turned to the Greek Testament ; for there we find, in the first member of the said verse, a verb, (*ἰρωνεῖτε*,) which is the same verb as is used in verses 5, 19, and 30, and which usually signifies, as it does in all these places, to ask *in the interrogatory sense*, as asking a question ; and in the second member of the verse we find a different verb, (*αἰρητε*,) which signifies to ask *in the precatory sense*, as asking a favour or benefit. The former verb is indeed sometimes used in the precatory sense ; but still its most common and familiar signification is decidedly the interrogatory, which that of the latter verb *never* is. No one who reads the verse in Greek, even without thinking of the context, can for an instant doubt of its meaning ; the change of the verb so naturally and obviously marks a change from one kind of action to another, from asking for information, to asking for a gift or benefit.

What now becomes of Mr. Hyndman's triumphant argument ? It falls to the ground along with the false interpretation upon which it was founded ; and leaves to him ; instead of the glory of having brilliantly "burnt to ashes that fabric of mysticism," (meaning, of course, the orthodox faith, or rather the established church,) "which,"

says he, “ has been reared by the learning of some ages, the ignorance of others, the superstition of weak, and the craft of designing men ;” nothing but the wretched alternative, whether (in addition to the character, to which our first quotation abundantly shews his claim, of a blind leader, and *a mystical blasphemer of holy mysteries,*) he chooses to be considered an ignorant pretender to learning, or a deliberate, designing falsifier of God’s Holy Word. It would be easy to establish his right to both these titles ; but either of them is sufficient for my purpose, which is merely to put my neighbours on their guard against his pretensions, and to protect the ignorant from being imposed upon by the profusion of Greek words with which he interlards his speeches, and illuminates his pages in *Italian* characters. Thus the words, *leitourgeo*, *latreuo*, *scbomai*, and *proseuchomai*, form one most imposing line in the Lecture, whose exordium we have been considering ; and without turning over a page, we see *proskuneo*, *epikalcomai*, *boesetai*, *epikalcomai*, judiciously dispersed at proper intervals, as rear and advanced guards. Can the person, who speaks so fluently about the meaning of Greek verbs, be supposed to have been ignorant of the difference between *erotao* and *aiteo* ? Or must we suppose him to have known it ; but basely and impiously concealed it, for the purpose of robbing his<sup>9</sup> Redeemer of his Glory ? Besides, what are we to

<sup>9</sup> Yes, *his Redeemer* ; for whether he *avail* himself of that redemption, or impiously reject it, the full price of *his* redemption *has been paid*. When Christ washed his disciples’ feet, typifying that except their sins were washed away by his blood they could not be saved, he did not pass by the traitor Judas, but washed his feet also ; thus shewing that His blood was shed for him, as well as the others. The full ransom was paid for the soul

think of the question, with which our extract from the exordium of his seventh Lecture closes? By asking, "Where is there an express command to worship Jesus?" does he not in fact deny that any such command exists? Consult Philip. ii. 10, Heb. i. 6, John, v. 23; and then say what dependance is to be placed upon Mr. Hyndman's assertions.

Indeed, the boldness with which he ventures upon false assertions is truly astonishing. The following instances occur within the compass of four pages of what he calls General Considerations.

I. He roundly asserts, that "The only declaration of Moses that appears to have reference to Christ, is the following: 'A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you like unto me, &c.'" Thus does the "Minister of the Unitarian Chapel, Alnwick," with a single stroke of his pen, cancel the promise made to our first parents, and totally blot out the promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which are referred to in all the leading circumstances of the History and Law of Moses. See Gen. iii. 15, vi. 18, xii. 3, xxii. 18, xxvi. 4, xxviii. 14, xl ix. 10. Also Luke, i. 54, 55, 70—75. Acts, ii. 39. Matt. iii. 9, with John, viii. 39. Rom. iv. 13—16. Gal. iii. 6 —17. Whether any mental reservation led Mr. Hyndman to choose the ambiguous expression, "Declaration of Moses," it is not for me to judge; but he proceeds as if by one *assertion* he had *proved*, that no other declaration regarding Christ was contained in the books of Moses.

of the traitor; and if he remained in the hands of the Devil, it was his own choice. Life and death were set before him, (as they are before every human being,) and he chose death.

II. Advancing to the prophets, he says, " Not once are their compositions inflamed with what, had they known of it, must have highly exalted them—the *Deity* of Jesus Christ. On this, they are silent." Consult Isaiah, ix. 6, xl. 9—11, where the marginal translation of the 9th verse is best; Jeremiah, xxiii. 6, where the marginal and literal translation is, " JEHOVAH our Righteousness." Zechariah, ii. 8—13, with Isaiah, xlvi. 12—17. Also Psalm xlvi. 6, 7, and cii. 25—27, with Heb. i. 8—12; and Psalm cx. 1, with Matt. xxii. 43—45.

III. " Going forward to the New Testament," after gravely asserting that " for about thirty years after Christ," (that is, while the eye-witnesses were still alive, 'and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following,') " no other means of information on these subjects existed," but " the Gospel of Matthew ;" he thus proceeds,— " And how many passages in it are thought to have any reference to the Deity of Christ? Only two, from which it is contended that it can be inferred, while it is directly opposed by the general tenor of the whole." Need I take the trouble of confuting this audacious falsehood? I shall just mark down enough for the purpose, and then barely enumerate the remaining untruths, crowded into these four pages. Matt. i. 23, iii. 3, (with Is. xl. 3,) viii. 8—13, viii. 26, ix. 2—7, x. 8, xxii. 42—45, xxiv. 30, 31, xxv. 31, 32, xxviii. 19, and xxviii. 20—eleven passages, each contains a distinct recognition and separate proof of the Deity of Christ : and in rapidly turning over the pages of that gospel to select these, I passed by a much greater number, from which *it is contended*, and truly contended, *that it may be inferred*.

IV. and V. His disgusting falsehoods thicken as we advance. The following short sentence contains *two*, if possible, more daring than any of the preceding. "It is remarkable that in the Gospel of Mark, there is only one passage claimed by Trinitarians; and in the Gospel of Luke only two." IN THE FIRST CHAPTER of St. Mark's Gospel, there are *twelve*, if not more, passages "claimed by Trinitarians," viz. in verse 2, (with Mal. iii. 1,) 3, (with Is. xl. 3.) 7, 8, 11, 13, 24, 25, 31, 34, 41, and I think 14, for Christ is the King of "the Kingdom of God;" also verse 1, for Christ is "the Son of God," in a peculiar, even a Divine sense: see note F. And IN THE FIRST CHAPTER of St. Luke, there are *five*, viz. in verse 16 with 17, 32 with 33, 35, 43, and 76.

VI. "These Gospels," (viz. the three first,) "are ushered into the world for the purpose of teaching men all that is necessary to be believed, each independently professing to give all saving knowledge." NOT ONE of them contains any such profession; so that the short clause, "each independently, &c." involves, in fact, *three* violations of truth, though we here only count it as one.

VII. "They contain confessedly nothing on the grand points of Christian Doctrine, except a few incidental detached passages, from which the details of orthodoxy can be deduced." No such confession was ever made; nor can any thing be farther removed from the truth, than that which we are falsely asserted to have confessed. Here again, therefore, if we chose to be strictly just in our reckoning, we should count two falsehoods, instead of one.

VIII. "Is not this a decisive proof that the Deity of Jesus was totally unknown to the writers?" (viz. Matthew, Mark, and Luke.) This may possibly be denied to be a falsehood, because it comes in the shape of a question ; and sounds like an argument, being an inference drawn, by a peculiar species of *Reductio ad Absurdum*, from his own admission of the very reverse : see his words in Falsehoods, iii. iv. and v. That the Deity of Jesus was unknown to these Evangelists, or to any of them, is however as false as it is possible for falsehood to be.

IX. "Even in the Gospel of John there are not, avowedly, above a few," (delightful expression! ABOVE A FEW,) "passages that Trinitarians can bring into their service." This is too contemptible to deserve contradiction.

He then goes on to establish, by the same species of argument he had applied to the three first Evangelists, (see No. viii. above,) founded on an equally false assumption as to the contents of the Acts of the Apostles, that "Paul, Peter and Philip," (why does he not mention Stephen ? see Acts, vii. 59, 60,) "had no knowledge, and no belief of such a system," as that which maintains the Divinity of Christ. And pretending to "look into the Gospel Epistles," he unblushingly declares, that "In the Epistles addressed to the Thessalonians and the Galatians, and in those of Philemon, James, and 2d Timothy, it is not pretended that there is a single passage that supports the orthodox opinions. And in the rest, it is not contended that there are MORE THAN A FEW incidental, scattered passages that countenance those doctrines." But this quotation brings me into a fifth page ; and I am already weary of the disgusting task of dragging to light the baseness of so despicable an opponent.

After seeing nine such atrocious falsehoods extracted from four pages of his book, no one can pay the least respect to any assertion of Mr. Hyndman's. "A cause that stands in need of falsehoods to support it, and an adversary that will make use of them, deserve nothing but contempt;"<sup>1</sup> which is the only answer I shall give to the rest of Mr. Hyndman's book, or to any thing he may think fit to publish hereafter.<sup>2</sup> It is glory to be calumniated by one so incapable of adhering to the truth. It is not, therefore, because *he* has asserted in his preface that the system which he teaches "was embraced by Newton and Locke;" but because the same and similar assertions, though often refuted, are continually repeated by modern Socinians in general, just as familiarly as if their truth had never been called in question, that I now proceed to repeat the public exposure of them, as base and designing calumnies.

The following is part of a letter, dated Belfast, June 10, 1813, addressed by Dr. Bruce, an Irish dissenting Clergyman, to the Editor of the *Monthly Repository*, which is the organ of the modern *Socinians*; for so Dr. Bruce very properly calls them, protesting against their usurpation and abuse of the title of *Unitarians*. After clearing himself and his dissenting brethren from the im-

<sup>1</sup> Locke. *Second Vindication of the Reasonableness of Christianity, &c.*, at the beginning.

<sup>2</sup> "Several other" Lectures, he says, are reserved for publication: and doubtless, if the first volume meet with purchasers, the love of gain will secure to the public a liberal supply of poison from the same laboratory. Happily, however, for the health of Souls, the sample now offered for sale is so *heavy*, and fetid, and unpalatable, that the demand cannot be sufficient to keep the apparatus employed.

putation of Socinianism, cast upon them in the number of the Repository for Dec. 1812, Dr. Bruce thus proceeds.

" The excessive spirit of proselytism, which actuates so many of your correspondents, is not always confined to the living. It is a favourite opinion among them, that Newton and Locke were Socinians. The evidence for this is brought forward in your number for July, 1810, though, I think, little to the satisfaction of the writer himself. Sir Isaac Newton is claimed on the strength of *verbal* expressions, which he is said to have used to a Mr. Haynes. For the truth of this we are referred to a Mr. Baron, himself a Socinian, who says that Mr. Haynes, from whom he had it, was the most zealous Socinian he ever knew ; and therefore, surely, not an unexceptionable witness. For this quotation from Mr. Baron's tract, we are again referred to Mr. Lindsey's apology. This is slight ground for forming an opinion of the sentiments of so great a man, who wrote so largely on religion. As to the quotation from Sir Isaac's own writings, it might as well come from an Arian, or indeed from *any Protestant*, as from a Socinian."<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Bruce, be it observed, acknowledges himself to be an Arian, and therefore, certainly, would have been glad to discover that Newton was of the same opinion. But he is too honest to draw an unfair inference from a detached passage in the writings of that great man ; and so he honestly avows, that the quotation referred to does not even convey an Arian, much less a Socinian sentiment.

Sir Isaac Newton, the least discursive of writers, never deviated a single hair's breadth from the direct line of

<sup>3</sup> Quoted from Magee, 4th Ed. vol. ii. p. 803.

his argument ; and therefore, though he always mentioned Christ with the honour that is natural to an orthodox believer, he never had occasion to declare explicitly, (except in the public congregations of the Church,) his belief in the Divinity of our Saviour. The following sentence, in his *Observations on the Apocalypse of St. John*, chapter iii. comes nearer to such a declaration, than any thing else that I have met with in his writings. Referring to Revelation, ii. 9, he says, “ By ‘ the blasphemy of them which say that they are Jews, and are not, but are of the synagogue of Satan,’ I understand the *idolatry* of the Nicolaitans, who falsely said that they were Christians.” Now the Nicolaitans, in common with the other Gnostic Sects, denied the Deity of Christ, which was probably the chief cause of Newton’s opinion respecting them. At least that error alone fully justifies his opinion ; for nothing more is required to make their system deserve to be considered *blasphemy*, to be called *idolatry*,<sup>4</sup> and to exclude them from the denomination of Christians. Were we, therefore, to infer from this passage, that Newton considered the denying of the Divinity of Christ, to be *blasphemy*, to be *idolatry*, to be an error that renders its maintainers *unworthy of the name of Christians*, I am sure the inference would be far more fair and probable, than any that our opponents can draw from any part of his writings, on the other side of the question.

As to Locke, he certainly was led into errors, as well in his *Reasonableness of Christianity*, as in his *Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles to the Galatians, Corinthians, Romans, and Ephesians*, by a passion for simpli-

<sup>4</sup> See Note at page 123.

fying, and a too great dependance on his own powerful understanding. But none of his errors justify the Socinians, in claiming him as their partisan ; and it is quite inconceivable how they can have the effrontery to persist in that claim, in the face of his own most pointed declarations to the contrary. I trust these gentlemen will allow Mr. Locke to know his own opinions. Hear then what he says on this subject in his *Vindications of the Reasonableness of Christianity.*

" I shall leave the Socinians themselves to answer his<sup>5</sup> charge against them, and shall examine his proof of my being a Socinian. It stands thus, ' When he (the Author of the Reasonableness of Christianity,) proceeds to mention the advantages and benefits of Christ's coming into the world, and appearing in the flesh ; he hath not one syllable of his satisfying for us ; or by his death purchasing life or salvation, or any thing that sounds like it. This and several other things shew that he is all over Socinianized.' Which in effect is, that because I have not *set down* all that this author perhaps would have done, therefore I am a Socinian. But what if I should say, I set down as much as my argument required, and yet AM NO SOCINIAN ? Would he, from my silence and omission, give me the lye, and say, I am one ? Surmises that may be overturned by a single denial, are poor arguments, and such as some men would be ashamed of : at least, if they are to be permitted to men of this gentleman's skill and zeal, they require a good memory to keep them from recoiling upon the author. He might have taken notice of these words in my book, ' From this estate of death JESUS CHRIST RESTORES all mankind to life,' And a

<sup>5</sup> Mr Edwards, who charged Locke with favouring Socinianism.

little lower, ‘The life which Jesus Christ restores to all men.’ And, ‘He that hath incurred death by his own transgression, cannot LAY DOWN HIS LIFE FOR ANOTHER, as our Saviour professes he did.’ This, methinks, SOUNDS SOMETHING LIKE Christ’s purchasing life for us by his death. But this Reverend Gentleman has an answer ready. It was not in the place he would have had it in ; it was not where I mention the advantages, and benefits of Christ’s coming. And, therefore, this and several other things that might be offered, shew that I am ‘all over Socinianized.’ A very clear and ingenious proof, and let him enjoy it.

“Another thing laid to my charge, is my ‘Forgetting, or rather wilful omitting some plain and obvious passages, and some famous testimonies in the Evangelists, namely, Matt. xxviii. 19, and John, i. 1, and 14,’ Mine it seems are all sins of omission.”<sup>6</sup>

“If the omission of other texts of Scripture, (which are all true also, and no one of them to be disbelieved,) be a fault, it might have been expected that Mr. Edwards should have accused me for leaving out Matt. i. 18 to 23, and Matt. xxvii. 24, 35, 50, 60, for these are ‘plain and obvious passages, and famous testimonies in the Evangelists.’ ”<sup>7</sup>

*“Socinianism, then, is not the fault of my book, whatever else it may be. For, I repeat it again, THERE IS NOT ONE WORD OF SOCINIANISM IN IT.”<sup>8</sup>*

The following quotations are from the book itself, *the Reasonableness of Christianity, &c.*, thus vindicated from the charge of Socinianism.

<sup>6</sup> Locke’s Works, Folio, 1740. vol. ii, p. 590.   <sup>7</sup> Ibid. p. 591.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. p. 592.

"The other parts of Divine revelation," (besides those the author had expressly referred to,) "are objects of faith, and are so to be received. They are truths, whereof no one can be rejected ; none, that is once known to be such, may, or ought to be disbelieved. For to acknowledge any proposition to be of Divine authority, and yet to deny or disbelieve it, is to offend against this fundamental article and ground of faith, that GOD IS TRUE."<sup>9</sup>

"Adam, transgressing the command given him by his heavenly Father, incurred the penalty, forfeited that state of immortality, and became mortal. After this, Adam begot children ; but they were 'in his own likeness, after his image,' mortal like their father.

"God, nevertheless, out of his infinite mercy, willing to bestow eternal life to mortal man, sends Jesus Christ into the world ; who being conceived in the womb of a virgin (that had not known man) by the immediate power of God, was properly the Son of God, according to what the angel declared to his mother, Luke, i. 30—35 —'The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee : therefore *also* that holy thing, which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.' So that, being the Son of God, he was, like his Father, immortal, as he tells us in John, v. 26. 'As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given the Son to have life in himself.'<sup>10</sup>

"That our Saviour was so," (that is in immortality like his Father,) "he himself farther declares, John, x. 18, where, speaking of his life, he says, 'No one taketh it from me, but I lay it down myself : I have power to lay it down, and power to take it up again.' Which he

\* Locke, vol. ii. p. 583.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. vol. ii. p. 558.

could not have had, if he had been a mortal man, the son of a man of the seed of Adam, or else had, by any transgression, forfeited his life. For ‘the wages of sin is death ;’ and he that hath incurred death for his own transgression, cannot lay down his life for another, as our Saviour professes he did. For he was ‘the just one,’ Acts, vii. 52 ; ‘who knew no sin,’ 2 Cor. v. 21 ; ‘who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.’ And thus, ‘as by man came death, by man came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive.’ ”<sup>2</sup>

Unnecessary as it must appear, I shall add one quotation more from Locke, namely, from his *Reply to the Bishop of Worcester*, who had attacked his Essay on the Human Understanding.

“ I find one thing more your Lordship charges on me, in reference to the Unitarian controversy, and that is, where your Lordship says, that ‘if these (*i. e.* my notions of nature and person) hold, your Lordship does not see how it is possible to defend the doctrine of the Trinity.’

“ My Lord, since I have a great opinion that your Lordship sees as far as any one, I should be ready to give up what your Lordship pronounces so untenable, *were it any other cause but that of an article of the Christian faith. For these, I am sure, shall all be defended, and stand firm to the world’s end*, though we are not always sure what hand shall defend them.. I know as much may be expected from your Lordship’s in the case as any body’s ; and therefore I conclude, when you have taken a view of the matter again, out of the heat of dispute, you will have a

<sup>2</sup> Locke, vol. ii. pp. 559, 560.

better opinion of the articles of the Christian faith, and your own ability to defend them."<sup>3</sup>

In this last quotation, Locke expressly pronounces the doctrine of the Trinity to be one of the articles of the Christian faith, *which he is sure shall stand firm to the world's end.* And in the preceding quotations, he distinctly professes his *full belief* in the *fall of man* and *original sin*; in the *immortality*, in terms which imply the *Divinity of Christ*; in the *immaculate conception*, the *sinless life*, and *meritorious death of our Redeemer*; and pointedly declares that *he is no Socinian*. What, then, shall we think of the men who go about the world, boldly asserting the very reverse of all this? What shall we think of their pretended **SCRUPLES OF CONSCIENCE** about the marriage ceremony? Is it not clear that their real scruples are against the existence of the Established Church? and that there is no baseness they would scruple to resort to, for the purpose of pulling down that great bulwark of the true Christian faith? I trust that, in all future sessions of Parliament, our Legislators will know them better, and be more generally awake to a sense of the danger of making any concessions to a set of men, whose conduct is so uniformly marked with falsehood and treachery.

Let me now close this long note, by entreating my more immediate friends and neighbours to **BEWARE OF THESE DANGEROUS MEN.** Read and meditate upon the Scriptures of Truth. Hold fast the profession of your faith without wavering, but without ostentation. Avoid vain jangling. Shim every occasion of strife or conten-

<sup>3</sup> Locke's Works, vol. i. p. 131.

tion, particularly upon sacred subjects. Be patient, be humble, be charitable, for “THE END OF THE COMMANDMENT IS CHARITY, OUT OF A PURE HEART, AND OF A GOOD CONSCIENCE, AND OF FAITH UNFEIGNED.”—1 Tim. i. 5.

(B) P. 8.—*It was necessary.*

Anti-Trinitarian and Deistical writers are much given to cavil at such expressions as this, as if they amounted to a denial of the Divine Omnipotence. In answer to all such cavils, we need only observe, that a Christian knows of no other law of necessity, but what is founded in the perfect and infallible Will of God. If we ever speak of the death of Christ, or the coming of the Holy Ghost, as *necessary* for our salvation, we do so without presuming to speculate on the possibility of God’s having accomplished it in any other way ; or to assert any thing more than the simple fact, that those are the means appointed by Him, *who does nothing in vain*—the only means by which we can be saved, or *conceive* the possibility of our salvation, consistently with the holiness of God. In like manner, we do not hesitate to say, it was *necessary* that Christ’s manhood should be altogether the same as ours, because we know it was so ordained by the all-wise and perfect God ; and because, knowing it to have been so, we can see a fitness and advantage in it, which we can conceive no other means of attaining.

It may be objected to the unreserved manner in which I state the absolute Humanity of Christ, “precisely the same as ours, naturally exempted from none of its natu-

ral feelings and natural infirmities," that it concedes to the Anti-Trinitarians their favourite opinion of His peculiarity. Nothing, however, can be farther from my meaning, which no one, I hope, will dispute with me the right of determining. Because "He was in all points tempted like as we are,"<sup>1</sup> and the very idea of temptation includes the *possibility* of yielding to it, I believe that Jesus Christ, considered in his *human nature*, was *liable* to all the natural infirmities of man. But because "he was without sin,"<sup>2</sup> "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners."<sup>3</sup> I believe that the Man Jesus Christ, by the strength of Divine Grace, completely triumphed over every human infirmity,<sup>4</sup> and from the first moment of his human existence, was totally free from all sin, of thought, word, or deed. He "knew no sin,"<sup>4</sup> "did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth."<sup>5</sup> This sinless purity made "his body" a fit "temple"<sup>6</sup> for "all the fulness of the Godhead" to inhabit; and it is impossible not to believe that the fulness of the Godhead, thus dwelling in it, must have contributed to keep the temple pure. Still, in all his human actions, the free and distinct agency of the Man Christ Jesus was not destroyed by his union with God the Son: and he continued clear from the taint of sin by the exercise of his own human powers, strengthened, but not superseded, by the assistance of God the Holy Ghost. "*Through the eternal Spi-*

<sup>1</sup> Heb. iv. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. vii. 26.

<sup>3</sup> "Jesus increased in favour with God," (Luke, ii. 52,) which is a pretty strong indication that he had human frailties to combat. Every one of these, as soon as it assailed him, was subdued; and every fresh victory over the flesh, the world, and the devil, increased his favour with God.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. v. 21.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 22.

<sup>6</sup> John, ii. 19 and 21.

*rit he offered himself without spot to God.*<sup>7</sup> This appears to be the doctrine of Scripture upon the subject ; and certainly gives us a far more exalted idea of the excellence of Christ's *manhood*, than if we supposed him naturally exempt from the possibility of sinning—a supposition which would take away the idea of his manhood altogether.

Very different is the doctrine of the Anti-Trinitarians on this most mysterious subject. "The Unitarian doctrine," says Mr Belsham, "is, that Jesus of Nazareth was a man, constituted in all respects like other men, subject to the same infirmities, the same ignorance, prejudices, and frailties." Observe, THIS IS ALL they offer us in the place of the Redeemer, whom they call upon us to abandon. They deny the *existence* of God the Son and God the Holy Ghost ; and reject, with contempt, the idea of any personal union between Jesus of Nazareth and God. According to them, therefore, "Jesus of Nazareth was a man," and nothing more ; begotten, born, and, in short, "constituted in all respects like other men ; subject to the same infirmities, the same ignorance, prejudices, and frailties ;" and possessing no peculiar advantages, no union with God, no spiritual aid to combat his natural infirmities. With these sentiments, so fearfully contrary to the truth of God's word, it is no wonder that, unconvinced by Is. liii. 9, 1 Pet. ii. 22, 2 Cor. v. 21, Heb. iv. 15, vii. 26, and ix. 14, 1 John, iii. 5, &c., they should think it doubtful, "whether, through the whole course of his *private* life, Jesus was completely exempt from the errors and FAILINGS of human nature." "This, however,"

<sup>7</sup> Heb. ix. 14. See also Luke ii. 40, and p. 39.

Mr Belsham adds, “ is a question of no great intrinsic moment.”

Certainly not, to them who will not receive him as “ the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”<sup>8</sup> But to us who are bowed down by the consciousness of our own sinfulness, which we feel must consign us to eternal misery, except we be washed by His blood —to us the purity of that blood is of inestimable value. We feel now, what they must one day feel—*Wo be to us if we believe not the Gospel*, whole and undefiled. Evermore preserve us, therefore, O Lord Jesu Christ, from these pestilent errors ; as well as from all false doctrine, hardness of heart, and contempt of thy word and commandments.

The preceding paraphrastic explanation of Mr Belsham’s words, is not founded upon unauthorised inferences from the words themselves, but upon his own clear, and often repeated declarations. That explanation unquestionably exhibits the sentiments which Mr Belsham avows, and which he gives out (though in this sentence, for the purpose of proselytism, with studied laxity,) as the “ Unitarian Doctrine.” If any one, *calling himself* a Unitarian, disclaims these sentiments, none will be more happy than I to acquit him of the charge, which is not made by me, but by Mr Belsham, the undisputed leader of the party, with which no person who is openly associated, can reasonably complain of being supposed to hold its sentiments.

The imperfection of human language renders it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to speak on the great mystery of “ God manifest in the flesh,” in terms that

<sup>8</sup> John, i. 29.

are not capable of being misinterpreted : but much of the inconvenience arising from that imperfection would be avoided, if men were always willing and desirous to understand words in the sense in which they are meant by him who uses them. On this principle I have interpreted Mr Belsham's words. Let the same principle be applied to mine above quoted from page 8, and to those in the lower paragraph of page 9, and in the second paragraph of page 39, and it will be obvious, I think, to every one, that I speak in those places of the nature of Christ's manhood *as it actually existed*, or was to exist, without meaning to say any thing about the manner in which it came into existence. In that, indeed, Christ's manhood differed immensely from ours, and in consequence of that difference was free from the taint of original sin ; so that in every respect, from the first instant of his human existence, " in him was no sin."<sup>9</sup> It must be equally apparent to every one who is willing to understand me, that the words frailty, feelings, infirmities, as applied to Christ, are confined to the idea of rendering it *possible* for him to sin.\* The word *natural* is added for the purpose of excluding all infirmities *ingrafted* on our nature by vicious education, example, or habit ; and the word *naturally* is prefixed to the words *exempted* and *differing*, in pages 8 and 9, for the purpose of admitting the highest degree of exemption from infirmity, and difference

<sup>9</sup> 1 John, iii. 5.

\* The word *peccable* strictly means no more than *liable to sin*, within the possibility of sinning ; but it may also convey the idea of actually *sinful*. This ambiguity is the reason why Anti-Trinitarians delight in applying it to our Lord, and therefore is an ample reason for us to resist the application. The same observation applies to the word *fallible*.

from other men, that can be conceived to be acquired by the exercise of the best human qualities, aided by the highest degree of Spiritual, which is *supernatural* power.

After all, I do not commit my first, and probably my last publication to the world, without considerable apprehensions that the language used in the places before referred to may be considered, by some of my best friends, injudicious and rash, as too liable to be misinterpreted by designing, and not exempt from the risk of being misunderstood by honest men ; and had not the pages that contain them been already printed off, I should have endeavoured to make some alteration, to diminish, as much as possible, the risk of misapprehension, though to remove it altogether is, I am persuaded, impossible. No one will charge Bishop Pearson with being rash or injudicious, yet his words, quoted in page 116, line 5, viz. " that He was subject unto all infirmities and miseries of this life, attending on the sons of men fallen by the sin of Adam," are not less ambiguous than mine, " that his manhood should be precisely the same as ours, naturally exempted from none of its natural feelings and natural infirmities." No one will say that the Articles of the Church of England are carelessly worded ; yet these words in the xvth Article, " Christ in the truth of our nature was made like unto us in all things, sin only except," seem as capable of being misinterpreted as the words by which I have expressed the very same sentiment : " The Man Jesus Christ had a soul and a body naturally differing in nothing from the soul and body of other men, and thus was perfect man, ' in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.' " No one, short of a Unitarian, falsely so called, will dare to charge St. Paul with inaccuracy ; yet his expression of

“ God having sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh,”<sup>2</sup> may be misconstrued and perverted to a sense altogether different from what he, writing under the guidance of the Spirit of Truth, intended.

If I thought there was any thing, either in the expressions I have been considering, or in any other part of these pages, likely to mislead *any* honest and serious inquirer after truth, I would either cancel it, whatever might be the expense, or suppress the book altogether. But, fully persuaded that nothing in it can mislead, and humbly trusting that in some parts it may prove a useful, as I have endeavoured in all to make it a faithful, guide to the less learned of my friends who are desirous of walking in the way of TRUTH, and being sanctified thereby,<sup>3</sup> I commend myself and my book to the candid judgment of all who are at the pains to read it, in the words of the venerable Bishop Sanderson, who thus closes the Preface to his Sermons, written December 31, 1655, when he was, as he tells us, 69 current.—“ I shall hope to find so much charity from my Christian brethren as to shew me my error, if in any thing I have said I be mistaken, that I may retract it ; and to pardon those excesses *in modo loquendi*, if they can observe any such, which might possibly (whilst I was passionately intent upon *the matter*) unawares drop from my pen. Civilities which we mutually owe one to another —*damus hanc veniam, petimusque vicissim*—considering how hard a thing it is, amidst so many passions and infirmities as our corrupt nature is subject to, to do or say *all that is needful* in a weighty business, and not in something or other to *over-say* or *over-do*. Yet this I can

<sup>2</sup> Rom. viii. 3.

<sup>3</sup> John, xvii. 17.

say, with sincerity of heart, and with comfort, that my desire was (the nature of the business considered) both to speak as plain, and to offend as little, as might be. If I can approve my carriage herein to the judgment and consciences of sober and charitable men, it will be some rejoicing to me ; but I am not hereby justified. I must finally stand or fall to my own Master, who is the only infallible judge of men's hearts and ways. Humbly I beseech him to look well if there be any way of wickedness or hypocrisie in me, timely to cover it himself, and discover it to me, that it may be, by his grace, repented of, and pardoned by his mercy ; by the same mercy and grace to guide my feet into the ways of peace and truth, and to lead me in the way everlasting."

N. B.—Several Anti-Trinitarian arguments are founded on the *assumption* that *it is admitted on all hands, or not disputed*, that the mind of Jesus was one. On the contrary, we maintain that Jesus had a human mind, distinct from the Divine, which also dwelt in him. The assumption, therefore, is false ; and no argument built upon it is worth a moment's consideration.

(c) P. 15.—“*Equal to the Father, as touching his Godhead ; and inferior to the Father, as touching his Manhood.*”

This clause of the Athanasian Creed ought to be made familiar to the memory of every Christian ; for it “may be,” and even in these pages has been, “proved by the most certain warrants of Holy Scripture ;” and when proved, affords a most ready and complete answer to almost all the arguments pretended to be drawn from

Scripture, against the Deity of the Saviour. As soon as our adversaries have produced a passage which shews that Christ is Man, or inferior to the Father, they triumphantly call upon the orthodox believer to abandon him as God. He, however, who has once satisfied his mind as to the truth of the above sentence, will, in a moment, expose the want of connection between the premises and conclusion of such an argument, by observing, that Christ is indeed Man, and as Man inferior to the Father ; but He is also God, and as God equal to the Father. No wonder our adversaries should be angry with a principle which acts so readily in subservience to the Divine purpose, by enabling “the foolish things of this world to confound the wise” in their own conceits. They call it a subterfuge, and accuse the orthodox of always resorting to it. But it is a truth founded upon the Word of God, to whom they, who call it a subterfuge, must answer for their blasphemy ; and truth is sterling stuff, which does not perish nor grow worse by the using.

1 Cor. xv. 24, 28, and Acts, x. 42, are two of the many passages from which Christ’s inferiority to the Father may be inferred, and which, therefore, are claimed by Arians and Socinians, as supporting their heresy. I select them, partly because of their bearing upon an important point, slightly glanced at in my first Discourse, p. 2, line 6, &c. and p. 13, line 10, &c. but chiefly from a desire to call the attention of the reader to the masterly manner in which the learned and excellent Jones, in his Catholic doctrine of the Trinity, has taken them out of the hands of the enemy, and, at the same time, illustrated the truth of the above Article of

Belief, by which an unlearned man might have done the same thing in fewer words.

By the side of 1 Cor. xv. 24, "Then cometh the END, when HE shall deliver up the KINGDOM TO GOD, even the FATHER," Mr Jones places Luke i. 33, "HE shall reign over the House of Jacob for ever, and of HIS KINGDOM there shall be NO END," and then argues thus —

" This of Luke being a contradiction in terms to that of the Apostle, shews the former to be spoken *only* of Christ's humanity ; as the latter relates *only* to his Divinity. When both are laid together, it is evident to a demonstration, that Christ is *perfect God*, as well as *perfect Man*. As *man*, he received a *kingdom*, which again, as *man*, he shall *deliver up*, when his mediatorial office, for which he took the nature of man, shall be at an *end*. But there is a *kingdom* pertaining to him which shall have *no end* ; and this cannot be true, unless he is a Person in that *God*, who, after the *Humanity* has *delivered up* the *kingdom*, shall be *all in all*. The distinction in this case between *God* and *man* in the joint-person of Christ Jesus is warranted by another part of the chapter, wherein the Apostle has given us a key to his own meaning. ' Since by MAN,' says he, ' came death, by MAN came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.' Here, it is evident, he is drawing a contrast between the *man Adam* and the *man Christ* ; so that, unless it be done on purpose, no reader can easily mistake the meaning of what follows.—' Then cometh the end, when HE (that is the *man Christ*, the second *Adam*) shall deliver up the kingdom,' &c. ; for so it

must be, according to the tenor of the Apostle's discourse.

"The *New Testament* abounds with expressions of this nature; but they have no difficulty in them, if it be only remembered that Christ is *man* as well as *God*, which Arians are willing, upon all occasions, to forget. And it has been chiefly owing to an abuse of these texts, that they have been able to put any tolerable gloss upon their heresy. The *Old Testament*, seldom speaking of Christ but as a Person of the Godhead *before* his Incarnation, does not afford them so many opportunities; and hence it is that most of them confine their inquiries to the *New*, which is the history of him *after* his Incarnation, when he appeared as 'the first-born among many *brethren*',<sup>4</sup> 'anointed above his *fellow*-*mankind*',<sup>5</sup> receiving authority and dominion from *God*, who, by a power superior to that of his human soul and body, 'put all things in subjection under his feet.'

"But some, for whose sakes he thus humbled himself, and became obedient in the flesh, instead of receiving it with humility and devotion, even cast it in his teeth, and make it an argument against him, vainly imagining that they do honour to their supreme *God*, while they say with Peter—'Lord, be it far from thee; this shall not,' it cannot 'be unto thee.'<sup>6</sup> And it is worth their while to consider whether they may not fall under the same rebuke, when it will be too late to retract and change their opinions."

With equal felicity does the same admirable writer

<sup>4</sup> Rom. viii. 29.

<sup>5</sup> Ps. xlv. 7, and Heb. i. 9.

<sup>6</sup> Matt. xvi. 22.

turn against our adversaries the following text, which they direct against their God and their Redeemer.

Acts, x. 42.—“ That it is HE which is ORDAINED of God to be the judge of quick and dead.”

“ This passage will help us to detect, once for all, that common fallacy of our adversaries, in misapplying such words as relate only to the *human* nature of *Christ*, and erecting arguments thereupon to the degrading of his supreme essence. *Christ* is *ordained* of God, it is true; and the nature that *receives* power must be inferior to the nature that *confers* it. But is his *Godhead*, therefore, *ordained*?

“ The Scriptures declare the contrary. ‘ GOD,’ (saith St. Paul,) ‘ hath appointed a day wherein HE will JUDGE the world in righteousness by that MAN (*εν αρθρῳ*, IN that MAN,) whom he hath ORDAINED.’<sup>7</sup> The supreme God that was ‘ manifest in the flesh,’<sup>8</sup> and, ‘ IN Christ, reconciling the world to HIMSELF,’<sup>9</sup> shall remain in the same personal union with him, till he has *judged* the world, and is ready to deliver up the kingdom.’ And though our Judge shall even then retain the character of a *Man*, yet, as *God* who *ordained* him, shall be present with him *in the same person*, the act of the last judgment is equally ascribed to both natures. In the text, just above cited, it is said—‘ *He* (God) will judge the world;’ though it immediately follows, that a *Man*, even the *Man* *Christ*, is *ordained* to this office. And so we have it again in the Epistle to the Romans.—‘ We shall all stand before the *judgment-seat* of CHRIST. For it is written, As I live, saith the LORD, every knee shall bow to ME, and every tongue shall confess to Gon. So

<sup>7</sup> Acts, xvii. 31.    <sup>8</sup> 1 Tim. iii. 16.    <sup>9</sup> 2 Cor. v. 19.

*then, every one of us shall give account of himself to God.*<sup>1</sup> We shall all give account of ourselves at the judgment-seat of *Christ*. And how does the Apostle prove it? Why, because it is written, that we shall all confess to *God*, who *liveth* for ever and ever. But unless Christ, who is a *Man*, be also this *living God* and *Lord*, this proof is not to the purpose." And that he is so in the Apostle's contemplation, is rendered, if possible, still more clear by the conclusion of the argument, which I have added to Mr. Jones's quotation; for there, viz. in v. 12, the word *God* is substituted for *Christ* in v. 10, in a way which unanswerably shews, that in the Apostle's mind, God and Christ were one Person.

As I have no intention of ever appearing again in this controversy, or imposing upon myself the irksome task of reading any future publication that may issue from the Anti-Trinitarian press at Alnwick, I shall here just point out the *antidote to the poisons* which our adversaries actually extract for their own use, and wickedly attempt to impart to others, from a few other portions of the *pure milk* of God's word. Several persons, I know, will read these pages in consequence of their particular connection or acquaintance with me, who could never be persuaded to read the elaborate work of Pearson on the Creed, or even Jones's short Tract on the Catholic Doctrine of a Trinity. If, therefore, it had no other effect but that of surprising such persons into a perusal of the extracts I have made from those excellent works in this and a preceding note, my publication would not be altogether unproductive of good.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. xiv. 10—12, and Is. xlvi. 23.

The clause of the Athanasian Creed which stands at the head of this note, is a full and sufficient correction of the Anti-Trinitarian perversions of the six texts next following, marked thus ;\* but I shall subjoin to one or two of them, a short note from Jones.

\* John, xiv. 28.—“ My Father is greater than I,”—That is, Christ is “ inferior to the Father, as touching his Manhood.”

\* 1 Cor. xi. 3.—“ The *head* of Christ is God.”—“ This text is capable of a good illustration from Gen. iii. 15, where we read, that the *heel* of the promised seed should be *bruised* : by which the church has always understood the sufferings of his *human* nature, metaphorically represented by the *inferior* part in man. So, in this place, his *Divinity* or *superior nature* is aptly signified by the *head* or *superior* part of the *human body*.”

\* Mark, xiii. 32.—“ But of that day and hour knoweth no man, nō, not the Angels which are in Heaven, neither THE SON, but THE FATHER.”

“ It is declared of Christ in another place, that he *increased in wisdom*. Why should it be inconceivable then, that during the whole term of his humiliation in the flesh, something should still be left, which, *as man*, upon earth he did not know ? If you suppose him to be ignorant of this matter, *as God*,” or in his whole nature, however regarded, “ how is it that St. Peter confesses him to be omniscient, without receiving any rebuke for it, or being reminded of any particular exception?—‘ Lord, thou knowest ALL THINGS.’ ”<sup>2</sup>

\* Acts, x. 40.—“ Him God RAISED UP and SHEWED HIM openly unto us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.”

<sup>2</sup> John, xxi. 17. See also xvi. 30.

John, x. 18.—“ I have power to lay it (my life) down, and I HAVE POWER TO TAKE IT AGAIN.” And John, xxi. 1. “ After these things JESUS SHEWED HIMSELF again to his disciples, at the Sea of Tiberias : and on this wise SHEWED HE HIMSELF.”

“ The former text takes something from Christ, as *man*; in which capacity he was at the disposal of the Father. But the” two<sup>3</sup> “ latter restore it to him again as *God*; under which character he is at his own disposal, and in unity with the Father. The same is to be said of the two articles which follow.”

\* Eph. iv. 32.—“ Forgiving one another, even as GOD, for CHRIST’S SAKE, hath forgiven you.”

Col. iii. 13.—“ Forgiving one another,—even as CHRIST hath forgiven you.”

\* John, vi. 38.—“ I came down from Heaven, not to do MY OWN WILL ; but the *will of him that sent me.*”

Matt. viii. 2.—“ And behold there came a leper, and worshipped him, saying, Lord if thou *wilt*, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus said, I WILL ; be thou clean.”

John, iii. 16.—“ GOD so loved the world, that HE GAVE his only begotten Son.”

Ephes. v. 25.—“ Christ loved the Church, and GAVE HIMSELF for it.”

The former of these texts has no reference to Christ’s manhood. See the conclusions of notes F and G.

Matt. xx. 23.—“ To sit on my right hand, and on my left, IS NOT MINE TO GIVE ; but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared of MY FATHER.”

“ Yet our blessed Saviour has promised elsewhere, to

<sup>3</sup> Jones only quotes one of the two, viz. John, xxi. 1.

bestow this reward in his *own right*, ‘ To him that overcometh will I GRANT to sit with me in my throne.’ Rev. iii. 21. This is sufficient to rescue the text from any heretical use that may have been made of it.” If there remains any difficulty, it arises from the words by which the ellipsis is supplied in the latter clause of Matt. xx. 23. So scrupulously conscientious were our honest translators, that they never supplied the commonest ellipsis without warning their readers of what they had done, by printing the words supplied in *Italics*. The words, *it shall be given to them*, in this verse, have no words corresponding to them in the original language, and therefore, in all legitimate copies of the Bible, are printed in *Italics*. The verbatim translation therefore is as follows, “ To sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give, but for whom it is prepared of my Father.” This is elliptical, but sufficiently intelligible ; and it must be apparent to every one, that our translators have supplied more words than are required, or than are at all likely to have been in the contemplation of the original penman. All that need be supplied to make the sense complete, is the antecedent to the relative whom, thus, “ To sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give,<sup>4</sup> but *to them* for whom it is prepared of my Father.”

“ The scope of the text therefore,” (to resume the words of Mr. Jones,) “ is to shew that nothing can be granted even by Almighty power itself, where there is not a suitable merit or disposition in the persons who claim it. ‘ God will give this honourable place to those for whom it is prepared by an invariable rule of justice ;

<sup>4</sup> Compare this in the Greek, with Mark, ix. 8, Matt. xvii. 8, and xix. 11.

whose *victory* of faith being foreknown and accepted, a seat is allotted them according to it.' The two passages laid together, supply us with this principle. As if our Saviour, who is the speaker in both places, had said,—' Though it be not mine to give, save to them for whom it is prepared of my Father ; yet, to him that overcometh, will I (even I myself) grant to sit with me in my throne ; because for him it is prepared.'

"It is not owing to any defect of power in the Trinity, or in any Person of it, that the Divine purpose cannot be changed ; but because it is impossible for the All-perfect God to break in upon the order of his distributive Justice. And it is upon this account only that we read of *Christ*, Mark, vi. 5, ' He COULD there do no mighty work.' For the *power* of doing a miracle was always present with him ; but the *place* being *improper* because of their *unbelief*, made the thing impossible. In the same manner, that declaration of the Lord in Gen. xvii. 22, is to be accounted for—' Haste thee, escape thither, for I CANNOT do any thing, till thou be come thither.' No man would hence conclude, that the hand of God is straitened, or his power limited ; but only that he does, and by his own nature *must*, act agreeable to the disposition of things and persons known to himself."

John, v. 19 and 30.—" The Son can do nothing of himself.—I can of mine own self do nothing."

I have great pleasure in referring my Alnwick readers to James Crozer's Substance of a Debate in the Unitarian Chapel, page 24, (omitting the preceding comparison, which rather spoils it,) for the true answer to the heretical argument founded upon these words. Like those last considered, they speak of one of the adorable

Attributes of the Deity, namely, the wonderful and to us inconceivable perfection of the Unity between the Three Persons of the Godhead. This arises naturally out of the infinite perfection of the other Attributes, as I have shewn in page 49. So complete is this Divine Union, that whatever is done by one of the Three Persons of the Godhead, is at the same time done by the other two; and, therefore, none of them *can* do anything of himself. Jesus himself has explained the words in the 19th verse exactly in this manner,—“**T**he Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: **F**OR **W**HAT **T**HINGS **S**OEVER **H**E **D**OETH, **T**HES**E** **A**L**O** **D**OETH **T**HE **S**ON **L**I**K**EWISE.” In consequence of the same harmonious Union of the Divine Nature, Jesus says of the Spirit, in John, xvi. 13—15, “**H**e shall not speak **O**F **H**IMSELF; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak. **H**e shall glorify me: **F**OR **H**E **S**HALL **R**E**C**E**V**E **O**F **M**INE, and shall shew it unto you. **A**LL **T**HINGS **T**HAT **T**HIE **F**ATHER **H**A**T**H **A**R**E** **M**INE: *therefore*, said I, that he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.”

This all-perfect Unity, this identity of action and purpose and thought, is an essential and most adorable attribute of the **ONE GOD IN TRINITY**, whom alone the Bible teaches us to worship; and the argument drawn from that attribute against the omnipotence of God the Son, or God the Holy Ghost, is exactly of the same value as that which might be drawn from Tit. i. 2, “**G**OD, that **C**ANNOT lie.”

**1 Cor. viii. 4, 5, 6.**—“There is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many and lords many, (but to us *there is but ONE GOD, THE*

FATHER, of whom are all things, and we in him ; and ONE LORD JESUS CHRIST, by whom are all things, and we by him."

"TO US THERE IS BUT ONE GOD, THE FATHER," is the favourite motto of the Anti-Trinitarians, and they pronounce it decisive against the Deity of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. It would be easy to shew, and perhaps I may have occasion to shew by and by, that these words, *taken by themselves*, do not lead to any such conclusion ; but let us first consider them in connection with the passage of which they form a part. Whoever does so, must immediately see that the expression, "one God, the Father," is not to the exclusion of the Lord Jesus Christ, more than the expression, "one Lord, Jesus Christ," is to the exclusion of God the Father ; but that both are to the exclusion of the gods many and lords many of the heathen nations. "In these words," says Bishop Pearson, "as the Father is opposed as much unto the *many lords* as *many gods*, so is the Son as much unto the *many gods* as *many lords*, the Father being as much Lord as God, and the Son as much God as Lord." Every argument that pretends to prove, from this passage of Scripture, that Jesus Christ is not God, must prove, exactly on the same grounds, that the Father is not Lord ; and thus leading to a conclusion which every one knows to be false, must be a false argument. It proves too much, and therefore nothing.

The Anti-Trinitarian exposition of this passage is founded upon an *assumption* that the word Lord, which throughout all the Scriptures is familiarly applied to the supreme God, is here used in a subordinate sense, in which it is not applicable to Jehovah : and that in hea-

then mythology the lords were inferior to the gods ; though, before assenting to that distinction, I should like to see a single passage from any Greek author in which the words *xugios* and *theos*, *lord* and *god*, are used in that relative sense. Without such authority, they cannot expect any reasonable man to admit the last mentioned part of their *assumption* ; and even if that were not doubted, he must find out a sense of the word *Lord* inapplicable to Jehovah, before he can assent to the former part. And suppose the assumption were as probable and well founded, as it is improbable and arbitrary, it would only add one more to the many texts in which the human nature of Christ is distinguished from the Divine. For upon that *assumption*, the only way, and *in truth* the best way to understand the word *Father*, in the expression, “ One God, the Father,” is, not as the distinguishing title of the first Person in the Trinity,—(a sense, by the bye, in which Anti-Trinitarians can never understand it,) but as “ our Father,” or “ the Father of all,” in either of which senses it is applicable to the whole *Trinity in Unity*, and therefore can have no tendency to exclude the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, from the Unity of “ the one living and true God.”

See note G.

John, xvii. 3.—“ And this is life eternal ; that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

Here the Man Jesus Christ addresses himself in prayer to God, his Father, in Heaven. This prayer seems to be addressed more particularly to God the Father : but no *true worshipper* can address the Father to the *exclusion* of the Son and the Holy Ghost, with whom He is perfectly united and identified ; and thus it

is the united Trinity, with which himself as God was one, (v. 22,) that Jesus here recognises as “ the only true God.” The texts, “ The God of our Lord Jesus Christ,” or “ the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,” recognise, in a similar manner, the distinction between the manhood and the Godhead of our Saviour. Such things are too wonderful and excellent for *us*. O Lord, who can attain unto them? Those who are hereafter admitted to see thee as thou art, will understand more of them in a moment, than the wisest man upon earth could discover by ages of deep contemplation.

(D) P. 17.—*We have strong reason to believe, if not positive evidence to assert, that he remained in subjection to them for thirty years.*

“ When he was twelve years old,” Jesus accompanied his parents in their annual visit to Jerusalem, at the feast of the Passover. And having there, in his conversation with the doctors in the Temple, given astonishing proofs of the wisdom with which he was filled, and the Spiritual strength which he already possessed, through the grace of God that was upon him, “ he went down with Joseph and his mother, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them.”<sup>1</sup> From this time till he was about thirty, all we are told about Jesus is, that he continued to “ increase in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.”<sup>2</sup> When he was “ about thirty years of age ;”<sup>3</sup> when all the people were resorting to John to be baptised, “ in those days it came to pass, that Jesus came

<sup>1</sup> Luke. ii. 40—51.

<sup>2</sup> Luke, ii. 52.

<sup>3</sup> Luke, iii. 23.

*from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptised of John in Jordan.*"<sup>4</sup>

It is clear, therefore, that, up to the thirtieth year of his age, Jesus continued to live in the same *village*; nor could one so much raised above all worldly and personal considerations, have had any motive not to continue to live in the same *house*, with his reputed father and undoubted mother. But it is the duty of every one, as long as he remains under the parental roof, and indeed of every inmate of a family, whether constant or occasional, to yield obedience to all the *innocent* regulations enjoined by the father, or head of the family, for the orderly government of the household committed to his charge. The father and mother of a family are responsible to God for the well governing thereof; and therefore must have, by the will of God, a right to be *thus* obeyed by every person under their roof. But Jesus never failed in the performance of a single duty; therefore, whatever reason we have to think that he remained for thirty years an inmate of Joseph and Mary's house, we have the same reason to believe that he remained in subjection to them for that period.

The boldness of his mother in suggesting to Jesus his first miracle at the marriage in Cana of Galilee,<sup>5</sup> seems to indicate a *habit* of having her requests complied with by him: And the rebuke, with which he accompanied his compliance in this instance, seems to have been intended to counteract that habit, by apprising her, that though he had hitherto *obeyed* her as being her son, living as a private individual in the house of which she was mistress, neither she nor any human being must presume to dic-

<sup>4</sup> Mark, i. 9,

<sup>5</sup> John, ii. 1—4.

tate to him in matters relating to the high and holy office, on the public exercise of which he was now about to enter.

The above considerations amount, I think, to a pretty strong reason for *believing* that Jesus remained in subjection to Joseph and Mary till his thirtieth year, and there is a way of translating Luke, iii. 23, which would give us positive evidence to assert it. The first clause of that verse is thus rendered in our authorised version—“And Jesus himself **BEGAN** to be about thirty years of age.” The word “*began*” answers to two words in the Greek, *νῦν ἀρχομένος*, *was beginning*. *Αρχομένος* is either the middle or passive participle present of the verb *ἀρχω*, whose primary signification is *to cause to begin*, the meaning corresponding to which in the middle voice is *to begin*, and in the present participle, *beginning*. But since *to cause to begin* is an act of precedence or authority, the same verb, *ἀρχω*, also signifies *to take the lead*, *to command*, and thence, in the present participle passive, *being commanded*, and therefore *subject to command*, or *in subjection*. If we adopt this signification of *ἀρχομένος*, instead of the more literal one adopted in the authorised Translation, Luke, iii. 23, would be rendered thus—“And Jesus himself **WAS IN SUBJECTION** about thirty years, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph,” &c.

(E) P. 26.—“*Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God.*”—Matt. xix. 17. Mark, x. 18. Luke, xviii. 19.

“If it should here be asked, for what reason Christ put this question—‘Why callest thou me good?’ I answer,”

(says Mr Jones,) “ for the same reason that he asked the Pharisees why David in Spirit called him Lord ;<sup>6</sup> and that was to try if they were able to account for it. This ruler, by addressing our Saviour under the name of *good Master*, when the inspired Psalmist had affirmed long before that ‘ there is none that doeth good, no not one,’<sup>7</sup> did in effect, unconsciously, allow him to be God ; no mere man, since the fall of Adam, having any claim to that character. And when he was called upon to explain his meaning, for that God only is good, he should have replied, in the words of St. Thomas—‘ My Lord and my God ;’ which would have been a noble instance of faith, and have cleared up the whole difficulty.”—*Cath. Doct. of Trin.* chap. I. sec. xxiv.

This view by no means contradicts what I say in p. 26, “ that our Lord declined the title *good Master* when applied to him *as man*, during his state of trial and humiliation.” For the ruler did apply it to him in that character alone, and our Lord, by pointing out the impropriety of such application, declined the title *as man*, while at the same time he tacitly laid claim to it *as God*.

(F) P. 28.—*The imperfection of human language, particularly when employed upon spiritual subjects.*

It is only a very obscure insight, that the most enlightened Christian is enabled to obtain on earth into the glories of God and his heavenly kingdom. We have no *natural* faculties for the perception of spiritual objects, except, perhaps, of our own souls. With regard to these

<sup>6</sup> Matt. xxii. 43.

<sup>7</sup> Psalm xiv. 3.

objects, therefore, we cannot walk by *sight*, nor form the most remote conception of them, without the intervention of *faith*, which is a spiritual organ, *supernaturally* conferred by the Holy Ghost, with which spiritual things are discerned, darkly reflected, as in a glass or mirror, from known and sensible objects. Our best ideas of the invisible things of God are necessarily formed, by analogy and comparison, from the things we are acquainted with here below ; nor can we speak of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, without employing language which is more properly applicable to the things of this world. It requires the constant exercise of faith unfeigned to prevent this unavoidable imperfection of human language giving us gross and unworthy notions of God, and his operations, and attributes.

For example, the word *Person*, which is applied to the Holy Ghost in page 23, and which is also applied to the Father and the Son, is the best word that our language supplies to express the idea intended. The idea itself, however, the best idea we can form of the personality of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is very obscure and inadequate ; and the word employed is very inadequate to express even that imperfect idea.

Again, the words Father and Son are the best that can be found to express the relation of the first and second Persons of the Trinity to each other ; but it requires the eye of faith and sincerity to discern the true meaning of those words when so applied. While infidels blasphemously cavil, like their Alnwick missionary, at “the notion of a begotten God,” the humble-minded believer readily perceives that the expression “only begotten Son,” as applied to the Saviour, either before or after his incarnation, is not intended to teach us any thing respecting the

*manner* in which God the Son derived his being from God the Father. This, he at once sees, can bear no analogy to any thing within the reach of human apprehension, and, therefore, he is not guilty of the presumptuous folly of attempting to form any idea upon the subject. All that he can understand by the expression “only begotten Son of God,” is, that God the Son has derived his existence from God the Father in a peculiar manner, different from that of every other being ; and that the relation resulting from that peculiar generation is best represented to us by the relation between father and son. I say *best represented*, but still very imperfectly ; for the most perfect equality of nature, and unity of counsels and desires, that we can figure to our imaginations between father and son, still falls infinitely short of the Divine reality.

A similar observation may be made respecting *the manner* in which the Holy Ghost derives his being from the Father and the Son. Not a syllable is contained in Scripture, from which even the most daring mind can venture to form an idea upon the subject. We are told expressly that he “ proceedeth,” that is, derives his existence, “from the Father;”<sup>8</sup> and indirectly,<sup>9</sup> that he proceedeth from the Son ; but as to the manner in which he proceedeth from the Father and the Son, we are told nothing, and can know nothing.

This necessary imperfection of human language opens a wide field for the cavils of unbelievers ; who, blinded by pride and perverseness of heart, are continually affixing gross, pagan ideas to Christian words, and then tri-

<sup>8</sup> John, xv. 26.

<sup>9</sup> See p. 24 ; and compare Matt. x. 20, 1 Cor. ii. 11, with Gal. iv. 6, Rom. viii. 9, 1 Pet. i. 11, Phil. i. 19.

umphing in the demolition of the phantoms thus created by themselves.

The system which they uphold, the idol which they worship, is also of pagan origin. The God of the Socinians is the same as the God of the Epicureans, a solitary God; who, antecedent to all creation, had existed from eternity, supremely happy in the contemplation of his own unexercised perfections. The communication of his happiness and perfections is, on the contrary, essential to the happiness, and is the highest perfection of our *benevolent* God, the only true God, revealed in Scripture. Since, therefore, it were impious, as well as absurd, to suppose that the unchangeable God can be less happy, or less perfect at one time than at another, it is certain that there never can have been an instant in which the happiness of God was *confined* to the *solitary* enjoyment of his own perfections. Reason, therefore, compels us to believe that God the Father must, from all eternity, have enjoyed the *society* of one or more co-equals; and revelation, by proclaiming them all eternal and Divine, shews that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, three Persons in the same Divine Essence, have all existed from everlasting, supremely happy in the perfect union and communion of all their perfections, counsels, wishes, and enjoyments. If it be objected, that we cannot reconcile the *eternity* of God the Son and God the Holy Ghost with the *derivation* of their existence from the Father, I answer, that our intellects are totally inadequate to grapple with eternity, or to give a definite decision upon any thing into which that incomprehensible idea enters. Nothing can be more absurd than for us to pretend to have an opinion respecting the **ORIGIN** of any thing **ETERNAL**; and we are quite as incapable of conceiving

the *eternal* existence of the Deity at all, as that particular mode of it, which the Scriptures inform us is the true one.

Even were the Deity comprehensible in every thing but his eternity, the incomprehensibleness of that eternity would demonstrate the folly and absurdity of all speculations relating to the eternal generation of the Son. This absurdity is immeasurably increased by our utter inability to form an adequate conception of the Deity in any of his attributes. Wise and happy are they who humbly acquiesce in this necessity of their nature, and never torture their *finite* understandings by vainly attempting to make them comprehend *infinity*. But if any person's mind be so vitiated with vain philosophy, as not to be able to repose in the simple doctrine of Scripture as to the relation of God the Son to God the Father, without some analogy to reconcile that relation with their co- eternity ; or if any one wish for such analogy to stop the mouths of gainsayers ; since " God is a Spirit," he must seek for that analogy in the spiritual world, where he knows nothing sufficiently to found an analogy upon, but his own rational soul. It is by analogies drawn from its qualities and operations, divested, as far as the imagination can divest them, of all faults and imperfections, that we are able to form our best conceptions of all the acts and attributes of God. Very inadequate must ever be the ideas thus formed, even when there does exist something in our minds resembling, at an infinite distance, what is revealed to us of the Deity ; and it is impossible for us to form any idea whatever of the *manner* of the eternal generation of the Son from the Father alone, (*μονος ἐκ μονον*,) to which there is nothing in the operations of our minds that bears even an infinitely distant resemblance. Let no

one, therefore, so far deceive himself as to imagine that he can discern in the following passage, translated from the Thesaurus of Cyril of Alexandria,\* any thing more than a faint illustration of the *possibility* of a spiritual generation, coeval with the existence of an incorporeal spiritual parent.

“ If any one would investigate the generation from himself, (viz. of God the Son from God the Father,) he ought to consider the fructifications of intellect, and to endeavour rather to compare with them (than with physical propagations) the generation of the Word ; and not to say that God is less capable of generating than body, because he generates not in a corporeal way. That the human intellect generates good thoughts, must necessarily be confessed. If it be impious to suppose that the human intellect is unfruitful, how much more absurd to think that the Supreme Intellect should be unproductive, and to deprive it of its proper fructification ? ”<sup>2</sup> Thus St. Cyril compares the generative faculty (if the expression may be allowed) of the Divine Nature to the necessary fecundity of Intelligence. And in another place he says, “ it may be conceived that the Son is in

\* Made Bishop of Alexandria, A. D. 412. “ His Thesaurus is a werk upon the Trinity, in which he lays down thirty-five propositions about the Divinity and consubstantiality of the Son and Holy Spirit, which he proves exactly after the manner of the schools, by texts of Scripture, upheld and supported by arguments and syllogisms in form, which he uses to subdue the Arians and Eunomians, and to retort upon them those testimonies of Scripture which they commonly alleged. He propounds their objections in the same manner, and answers them with like subtleties.”

—DU PIN’s *History of Ecclesiastical Writers*.

<sup>2</sup> See Bishop HORSLEY’s Tracts in Controversy with Dr Priestley. Disquisition iv. p. 521.

such sort begotten of the Father, as wisdom is of intellect." But this is carrying the matter too far, and proposing an explanation of an inexplicable mystery, instead of merely an illustration of its *possibility*. For this latter purpose, such comparisons as Cyril's are the best that can be found, and, I think, quite satisfactory ; but the moment we attempt to raise them into theories for explaining the *manner* of the Eternal Generation, we get beyond our depth, and involve ourselves in error and confusion.<sup>3</sup>

It is stated in the Athanasian creed, as a Doctrine of Scripture, that "the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one ; the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal.—And in this Trinity, none is afore or after other, none is greater or less than another ; but the whole three persons are co-eternal together, and co-equal." In that they are co-equal, none is greater or less than another : in that they are co-eternal, none is afore or after other. But though there is this perfect equality in eternity, in power and glory ; still there is a distinction of order and of office, by which the Father is the first Person in the Trinity, the Son the second, and the

<sup>3</sup> "In a subject so far above the comprehension of the human mind, as the doctrine of the Trinity must be confessed to be in all its branches, extreme caution should be used to keep the doctrine itself, as it is delivered in God's word, distinct from every thing that has been devised by man, or that may even occur to a man's own thoughts, to illustrate or explain its difficulties. Since the human mind in these inquiries is groping in the dark, every step that she ventures to advance beyond the point to which the clear light of revelation reaches, the probability is, that all these private solutions are, in different ways and in different degrees, but all, in some way and in some degree, erroneous."—HORSLEY'S *Tracts, &c. Disq. iv.*

Holy Ghost the third. This is inferred from the very names, Father and Son; from the fact of the Son having derived his being from the Father, and the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son; and from the Son's having been *given*<sup>2</sup> and *sent*<sup>3</sup> by the Father, and the Holy Ghost by the Father and the son.<sup>4</sup>

(G) P. 31.—*In this peculiar sense, CHILDREN OF GOD.*

Men are called Children of God, and God their Father, in various senses.

I. God is the “FATHER OF ALL,” as the author and preserver of their being. See Ephes. iv. 6, 1 Cor. viii. 6, Acts, xvii. 28, 29. Luke, iii. 38. Mal. ii. 10, Is. lxiv. 8.

II. Since the Holy Ghost is God, God is in a more peculiar sense the Father of all who are “born of water and of the Spirit;” that is, of all who “have been buried by Christ by baptism unto death,”<sup>5</sup> having thus in the appointed way, “washed away their sins,”<sup>6</sup> those *deadly* enemies of the soul, and received “the gift of the Holy Ghost,”<sup>7</sup> to *enable* them to “walk in newness of life.”<sup>5</sup> In one or both of these senses, we are all instructed to address God as “Our Father.” See Mat. vi. 1, 4, 6, 8, 9, 14, 15, &c. and xxiii. 9.

III. Not only all Christians; but all who at any time have professed to worship the true God, have *professed*

<sup>2</sup> John, iii. 16.

<sup>3</sup> John, iii. 17, and 1 John, iv. 9.

<sup>4</sup> John, xiv. 26, and xv. 26.

<sup>5</sup> Rom. vi. 4.

<sup>7</sup> Acts, ii. 38.

<sup>6</sup> Acts, xxii. 16.

(see John, viii. 41,) to be in a peculiar sense Children of God, and have occasionally been distinguished by that Title, as in Gen. vi. 2.

IV. But only they who actually worship God in spirit and in truth ; who obediently “ hear God’s words,”<sup>8</sup> and “ love” him who “ proceeded forth and came from God,”<sup>9</sup> are indeed the Children of God, in the sense to which that title is confined in the Epistles of St. John. As “ they which are of the faith, the same are the children of Abraham,”<sup>1</sup> because they imitate the faith, and “ do the works of Abraham ;”<sup>2</sup> so are they also called “ children of God,”<sup>3</sup> because they are sincere “ followers,” or imitators “ of God, as dear children,”<sup>4</sup> because they cultivate true love even towards their enemies, “ that they may be children of their Father which is in Heaven ;”<sup>5</sup> heartily, yet humbly endeavouring, “ in the power of his might,”<sup>6</sup> to be “ perfect even as their Father which is in Heaven is perfect.”<sup>7</sup>

The expression “ *born of God*,” in St. John’s Epistles, means *having become children of God*. *To be born*, or more literally *to have been born of God, to be of God*, and *to be Sons of God*, are one and the same thing : and the first time St. John uses the first of these expressions, he distinctly explains in what sense we are to understand it, namely, in the sense above deduced from his Gospel and other parts of Scripture, “ If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him. Behold what manner of love the

<sup>8</sup> John, viii. 47.

<sup>9</sup> John, viii. 42.

<sup>1</sup> Gal. iii. 7.   <sup>2</sup> John, viii. 39.   <sup>3</sup> Rom. ix. 8.   <sup>4</sup> Ephes. v. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. v. 45.

<sup>6</sup> Ephes. vi. 10.

<sup>7</sup> Matt. v. 48.

Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God.”<sup>8</sup>

None can be said in this sense to be *children of God*, nor consequently to be *of God*, nor *born of God*, but these who are actually *abiding* in true faith, and sincere obedience ; for “ Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not,”<sup>9</sup> and “ Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin ; for his seed remaineth in him ; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.”<sup>1</sup>—“ The seed is the word of God ;”<sup>2</sup> for “ of his own will begat he us with the word of his truth,” saith the Apostle James, i. 18. The meaning of the above verse, (1 John, iii. 9,) therefore is, “ Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin ; for if it be true that he is born of God, he is a Son of God, earnestly desirous of imitating his Father in Heaven ; and the seed of the word remaineth in his heart, teaching him how to bring his holy desires to good effect ; so that, strengthened by Divine Grace, he cannot fail in his sincere endeavours to do the Will of God : thus his freedom from sin is the test and sign of his being born of God, the fruit of the seed which remaineth in his heart.” This interpretation of the verse is abundantly confirmed by the context: Read from the 6th to the 10th verse inclusive, and you will see that *to abide in God, and to be born of God, and to be children of God*, all mean the same thing in the Apostle’s mind ;\* and that brotherly love and freedom from sin are proposed as tests or signs by which the children of God

<sup>8</sup> 1 John, ii. 29, and iii. 1.   <sup>9</sup> 1 John, iii. 6.   <sup>1</sup> 1 John, iii. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Luke, viii. 11.

\* Read also chap. ii. vv. 24—29, for a confirmation of the identity of these expressions ; v. 24, as also v. 14, are additional proofs that in St. John’s sense, “ The Seed is the Word of God.”

may be known, and the contrary qualities as marks of the children of the devil.

St. Peter describes the numerous class of men to whom his first Epistle was addressed, as “ elect according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ;”<sup>3</sup> and in their name and his own blesses the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, had *begotten them again* unto a lively *hope*.<sup>4</sup> The circumstance of the expression being applied, indiscriminately, to a large body of men, as well as other considerations arising out of the context, and the expression itself, “ *begotten again*,” i. e. *regenerated*, shew that it is the grace of baptismal *regeneration*, and admission into the Christian Church, upon which the Apostle congratulates “ the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.” See p. 170. n. p. 31, and p. 91—100. And it is the same regeneration to which he refers, when he exhorts them, in consequence of it, to brotherly love, “ See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently; being born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”<sup>5</sup> To them, therefore, as to every *adult convert*, the word of God was a means employed to convey the incorruptible seed of the Spirit, of which they were *born again*. I have heard it argued from the incorruptibleness of the seed, that all who are born again must “ live and abide for ever.” This opinion gains I know not what fallacious plausibility from the words “ which liveth and abideth for ever,” at the end of the

<sup>3</sup> 1 Pet. i. 2.

<sup>4</sup> v. 3.

<sup>5</sup> v. 23.

verse. These words, however, manifestly apply either to the antecedent “ God,” or “ the word of God ;” and, however they be applied, can add nothing to the force of the epithet, “ incorruptible,” which is applied to the “ seed.” Whether the word “ seed,” in this verse, be understood to mean “ the word of God” itself, or (which is a more natural construction) the mysterious influence of the Spirit which accompanies the Sacrament of Baptism ; it is certain that **SEED** is “ incorruptible,” or immortal, and therefore liveth and abideth for ever. Other seeds “ are not quickened except they die ;” but this *Divine, immortal seed* remaineth ever sound and fresh, how great or how small soever be the growth arising from it. In some soils it may hardly strike root, in some it may produce a sickly, and in some a healthy plant ; but the difference is owing entirely to the difference of the soil or culture ; for the *seed* everywhere is, and always remains, the same, ready to make vigorous shoots whenever it meets with a genial soil. The Spiritual **PLANT**, if not duly tended, may, at any stage of its progress here below, wither, pine, and *die* to the very root, without in the slightest degree impairing the inherent fecundity of the “ *incorruptible SEED*,” which liveth and abideth for ever.

We may observe by way of corollary, to the four marked heads of this note, that the title Father, when applied to God with reference to Men as his children, is not necessarily confined to the first Person of the Trinity. See particularly the second head. See also Isaiah, ix. 6, where the Son of God is called, “ The mighty God, the everlasting **FATHER**.” In our daily prayers, we address the united Trinity as “ Our Father in Heaven.”

We may also observe, that all the reasons why men may be called children or sons of God, apply equally to the

*Man Jesus Christ.* The fourth reason in particular, applies to him, with infinitely greater propriety than to any other man ; for he alone of men has attained *in perfection*, that resemblance to God in which this exalted species of Sonship consists. The *Man Jesus Christ* had, moreover, a peculiar claim to “be called the Son of God,” arising from his miraculous conception, (see Luke, i. 35,) and again from his resurrection, (see Acts, xiii. 32, 33, and Col. i. 18.) But the highest and most strictly proper sense, in which our Lord Jesus is called the Son of God, is that which we considered in the preceding note, appertaining to his Godhead ; in which sense he was “the only begotten Son of God,” before he was “sent into the world ;”<sup>6</sup> before all creation ;<sup>7</sup> “in the beginning,”<sup>8</sup> even from everlasting ; being begotten of the Father, “by eternal generation, in the same Divinity and Majesty with himself.”<sup>9</sup>

(H) P. 44.—*Their Creeds, or Rules of Faith, consisted at first simply of a declaration of belief in the Holy Trinity.*

“ Immediately before the ascension of our Saviour, he said to his Apostles, *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth, Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* From this sacred form of baptism did the church derive the Rule of Faith, requiring the profession of belief in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, before any could be baptised in their name.

<sup>6</sup> John, iii. 16, 17, and 1 John, iv. 9.

<sup>7</sup> Col. i. 15.

<sup>8</sup> John, i. 1.

<sup>9</sup> Pearson on the Creed, vol. I. p. 66.

They who were converted unto Christianity were first taught, not the bare names, but the Explications and Descriptions of them, in a brief, easy, and familiar way ; which, when they had rendered, acknowledged, and professed, they were baptised in them. And these, being regularly and constantly used, made up the Rule of Faith, that is, the Creed. The truth of which may sufficiently be made apparent to any, who shall seriously consider the constant practice of the church, from the first ages unto the present, of delivering the Rule of Faith to those which were to be baptised, and so requiring of themselves or their sureties, an express recitation, profession, or acknowledgment of the Creed.”—PEARSON, vol. I. pp. 55, 56.

In confirmation of this statement, Bishop Pearson quotes, in a note, the Creed delivered to Constantine by Arius and Euzoios, upon the exhibiting of which they were restored to the communion of the church by the synod of Jerusalem. “ We have derived this faith from the holy Gospels, where our Lord says to his disciples, Go ye, teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” In the same manner, Eusebius delivered his Creed unto the Council of Nice, concluding and deducing it from the same text. And Vigilius\* Tapsensis, in a Dialogue or Conference, in which he introduces the opponents, Athanasius and Arius, as speakers, makes them agree in the following confession of faith. “ We believe in God the Father Almighty ; and in Jesus Christ, his Son, our Lord ; and in the Holy Ghost. This is the rule of our

\* It is a prevailing opinion that this Vigilius, who was Bishop of Tapsus, in Africa, near the end of the fifth century, drew up the Athanasian Creed.

faith, which the Lord delivered with Divine authority to his Apostles, saying, Go ye, baptise," &c.

The following passage, quoted by Archbishop Usher in his *Diatribæ de Romana Ecclesiæ Symbolo Apostolico*, &c., from the Preface of an Exposition of the Creed, written by *Ruffinus* of Aquileia about the end of the fourth century, adds some degree of confirmation to Bishop Pearson's statement, though contrary to the writer's own opinion.—“ I think it not improper to mention, that in these forms of words, (Creeds,) some things are found to have been added in different churches. In the church of the city of Rome, however, this is not *discovered* to have been done ; which I consider to be for these reasons, both because no heresy has originated there, and because the ancient custom is there observed, that they who are about to receive the grace of baptism repeat the Creed publicly, that is, in the hearing of the body of believers ; and so the audience of those who have gone before in the faith, prevents the addition of a single word. But in other places, as far as we can learn, some things, by which opinions of modern doctrine were thought to be excluded, seem to have been added on account of particular heretics.”

Mosheim, in his Ecclesiastical History, cent. i. part ii. chap. iii. writes thus about the origin of the Apostles' Creed. “ There is extant a brief summary of the principal doctrines of Christianity, which bears the name of the Apostles' Creed, and which, from the fourth century downwards, was generally considered as a production of the Apostles.\* There is much more reason and judg-

\* *Ruffinus* of Aquileia, above quoted, who died A. D. 410, “ declares that the Apostles had a conference together, to compose

ment in the opinion of those who think that this Creed was not all composed at once, but from small beginnings was imperceptibly augmented, in proportion to the growth of heresy, and according to the exigences and circumstances of the Church, from which it was designed to banish the errors that daily arose."

In every stage of its progress, from the simple declaration of belief in God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to the form in which it appears in our liturgy and office of baptism, this summary would naturally retain the name of the Apostles' Creed; for the express design of every authorised addition to it has been to preserve the true meaning of each article, as it was taught and *expounded* by the Apostles. In the viith Article of our Church, it is described as "that which is *commonly called* the Apostles' Creed," to shew that we are not to consider it as a particular *form of words*, drawn up by the Apostles, but as a Creed containing the fundamental doctrines which they taught. In like manner, that "Confession of Christian Faith, commonly called the Creed of St. Athanasius," is not supposed to have been written by Athanasius, but it bears his name, because he was a most zealous defender of the tenets it contains, against the Arian heresy.

" Much less objection would have been started against the Athanasian Creed, if the circumstances which occasioned the several expressions in it had been duly considered. This Creed, it may safely be allowed, has *appa-*

*the Creed, before they divided, that so they might teach all whom they should convert by the same common Creed. That it is called Symbolum, either because it is the result of a conference betwixt several persons, or because it is the mark of distinction whereby Christians are known." —DU PIN.*

rently the fault which has been charged upon it, of attempting to define with accuracy, and to reduce within the compass of language, matters which are confessedly beyond the reach of human intellect, and not to be expressed by any terms of human invention. This fault, however, did not arise from the intention of those who framed it. They were called upon to guard against the erroneous opinions of different heretics, who had introduced, on the subject of the Trinity and Incarnation, various subtleties of explanation, tending to degrade religion, and sanction positions inconsistent with just views of Revelation. In these circumstances it was necessary to multiply articles, for the purpose of meeting heresy at every point; and to make various affirmations of truth, not so much for the purpose of defining what men ought, as of excluding what they ought not to believe."

*The Athanasian Creed Vindicated, &c. by the Rev. James Richardson, M. A. of Queen's College, Oxford, &c.* who refers to Quarterly Review, No. XI. October 1811, p. 192.

- (1) P. 49.—*Whatever is known by the Father is known by the Son, and known by the Holy Ghost.*

I annexed the letter of reference to these words as they were passing through the press, with the intention of here considering the Socinian objection to the sentiment they contain, founded upon Mark, xiii. 32. But that purpose has been anticipated in Note (c) p. 153. There, two passages are produced, to prove the omniscience of Christ, as GOD. Instances of this omniscience are frequent in the Gospels. One of them (John, i. 45—

50) at once convinced Nathanael that he was the Son of God, the Messiah, or King of Israel. Another (John, iv. 17—29) produced a like conviction in the woman of Samaria. And it was the overpowering consciousness that he knew, and could expose, their most secret sins, which caused the Scribes and Pharisees and all the people, to steal out of the Temple one by one, when Jesus challenged him that was without sin to come forward, and first cast a stone at the adulteress. (John, viii. 3—9.) See other proofs of the Son's omniscience in Luke, v. 22, vi. 8, ix. 47, xi. 17.

As to the omniscience of the Holy Ghost, it is a branch of his peculiar office to reveal to us the counsels of God. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."<sup>1</sup> The Apostles and Prophets of the New Testament also were inspired by the Holy Ghost, who "guided them into all truth,"<sup>2</sup> "brought all things to their remembrance," "taught them all things."<sup>3</sup> If these, coupled with the general proofs of his Divinity, be not sufficient to stop the mouths of the gainsayers, and make them confess the omniscience of the Holy Ghost, refer to that decisive passage, 1 Cor. ii. 10, "THE SPIRIT SEARCHETH ALL THINGS, YEA, THE DEEP THINGS OF GOD."

(K) P. 57.—*Knowing from his own experience the powerful effect of pride in producing disobedience.*

The most direct information we possess respecting the case of the fallen angels, is contained in 2 Pet. ii. 4, and

<sup>1</sup> 2 Pet. i. 21.

<sup>2</sup> John, xvi. 13.

<sup>3</sup> John, xiv. 26.

Jude, 6 ; from which passages it appears that they were created in a state of happiness and perfection corresponding to their angelic natures ; and that the sin which occasioned their fall was PRIDE, ambitious and rebellious pride. "The angels which kept not their first estate," saith St. Jude, "but left their own habitation," (aspiring, doubtless, to a higher and more glorious abode than had been assigned them by the wisdom of their Creator,) "he hath reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day." The words in Isaiah, xiv. 12—15, are, indeed, figuratively applied to the King of Babylon ; but they have a clear allusion to the fall of Satan, from which the metaphor is manifestly borrowed,<sup>4</sup> and therefore are a strong confirmation, or rather a demonstration, of the truth of the above view of the sin of Satan and his angels. "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning ! how art thou cast down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations ! For thou hast said in thy heart, I will ascend into heaven : I will exalt my throne above the stars of God : I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north : I will ascend above the heights of the clouds : I will be like the Most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit." That pride was the sin for which the angels fell, is also apparent from 1 Tim. iii. 6. "Lest, being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil."

The preceding paragraph contains, I believe, the sum total of what is revealed to us in Scripture, which is all we can know, concerning the primary origin of evil, by the apostacy of Satan and his rebel host. If it be not

<sup>4</sup> Compare Is. xiv. 12—15, with Luke, x. 18, and Rev. ix. 1, 11.

sufficient to satisfy the vain curiosity of man, it is amply sufficient to vindicate the power and goodness of God, which is the only purpose for which it concerns us to know any thing upon the subject. Liberty of will, and a power of regulating his actions by the dictates of that will, are essential to the perfection of every rational being. Without freedom of judgment, reason cannot exist ; and that, without liberty of acting according to his judgment, would render reason a perpetual torment to its possessor. But this power of judging and acting for himself must, in every created and subordinate being, include the *possibility* of judging and acting wrong. The very existence of *rational creatures*, therefore, implies the possibility of evil : and with regard to the particular evil which caused the first disobedience both of men and angels, viz. PRIDE, we may observe, that the very excellences which are given as a security against other evils, prove a temptation to this ; and the more perfect and excellent the creature is, the greater is this temptation to Pride, the mother of evil.

(L) P. 58.—*Nor in the manner they would afterwards have been opened, had they come to eat of the same fruit with faith, and in obedience to the will of God.*

The mode of conveying spiritual instruction by symbols and visible signs, serving at the same time as exercises of faith, and means of confirming it, is a leading feature of God's intercourse with man in every period of the world, and seems to be peculiarly suited to the constitution of human nature. “For since,” says Archbishop King,<sup>5</sup> “man has a body as well as a soul, senses as well

<sup>5</sup> In a Sermon on the Fall of Man.

as understanding ; and that the soul does make use of the organs of the body and of the senses for its information ; and that this is the natural course of our acquiring knowledge ; it were a violence to the nature of man to invert the method, or separate the one from the other. And therefore God, in his communications with us, seems industriously to have avoided it.

" Now, this being the manner of God's entertaining an intercourse with man through the whole Scriptures, it is very evident that the two remarkable trees of Paradise, that of Life and that of the Knowledge of good and evil, were designed for these mystical purposes, and intended as settled and visible means to supply man with God's influence and assistance." These trees were truly sacramental. They were *outward and visible signs*, to which God had actually attached an *inward and Spiritual grace*; so that to have partaken of their fruit with faith, and in obedience to the Divine Will, would assuredly have procured, in one case, a happy Immortality, and in the other, an elevating Knowledge of things spiritual, pure, and holy ; but if partaken of unworthily, and in defiance of God's commands, the former would doubtless have entailed an eternal Life of misery, as we know that the latter did a degrading and corrupting Knowledge of all things carnal, sensual, devilish. And as the sinful eating of the fruit of the tree of Knowledge brought death, and degradation, and misery into the world, so there seems no ground to doubt, that had man persevered in his faith and obedience, the fruit of the tree of Life, and of the tree of Knowledge, would have been the means through which God would actually have conferred upon him the rewards of an *enlightened* and blessed Immortality, of which he had appointed them the tokens and pledges. Till, however,

man should have rendered himself, by a humble, faithful, and patient continuance in well-doing, fit for the *secure* possession of glory, honour, and immortality, the fruit of the tree of life seems to have been mercifully placed beyond his power of attaining, by any knowledge he then possessed ; and of the fruit of the tree of knowledge he was forbid to eat on pain of death.

(M) P. 59.—*If they acquired, at the same time, some knowledge of human arts or their principles.*

**KNOWLEDGE IS POWER.** And had the first parents of mankind been intrusted at once with all the intellectual power their faculties were capable of, their *corporeal* weakness would have rendered them peculiarly liable, through the influence of pride, to abuse that power, and thus to fall into the same sin and the same condemnation as the more perfect angels had done before. God, therefore, seems mercifully to have withheld from them at first all knowledge but such as was essential to their happiness in the circumstances in which they actually were, and to have placed them in a state of probation admirably calculated to strengthen their faith, and so prepare them for the secure enjoyment of a more exalted state of happiness, consisting in a nearer approach to God, and a clearer insight into the wonders of his Almighty power. The fruit of the tree of knowledge was the appointed sacramental means of conveying to man this enlargement of understanding. *An* enlargement of understanding was the necessary consequence of eating thereof ; but whether the increase of knowledge so acquired should be good or evil, a blessing or a curse, depended entirely upon whe-

ther the fruit were eaten in obedience or disobedience to the command of God.

(N) P. 62.—*Animal sacrifice, if not formally appointed, was at least accepted, and therefore, we are sure, suggested by God, at its commencement, as a type of the one true Sacrifice, to be once offered for the sins of the whole world.*

“ All holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed from God.” Whether, therefore, the “ faith by which Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain,” and “ by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts,”<sup>6</sup>—Whether that faith were demonstrated by obedience to a positive command, or by prompt compliance with a holy suggestion, in either case the rite of animal sacrifice *originated* in the Will of God ; and its general adoption in the world can only be accounted for by the existence of such a persuasion, whether solely produced, or only confirmed, by the “ respect” which the Lord manifested “ to Abel and his offering.”<sup>7</sup> This consideration brings MR. BENSON’s views on the subject into nearer accordance with those of other divines than he himself seems willing to admit ; and admiring, as I do, the acuteness of all, and acknowledging the truth of most of his observations in xth, xith, and xiith HULSEAN LECTURES for 1822, I still maintain the *primitive* Divine institution of animal sacrifice as typical of the sacrifice of Christ. The *inward suggestion and visible acceptance* of Abel’s offering are

<sup>6</sup> Heb. xi. 4.

<sup>7</sup> Gen. iv. 4.

quite sufficient to constitute a Divine institution, without having recourse to the arbitrary supposition of a previous *express command*. And with regard to the typical nature of the institution, the beautiful ideas thrown out by Benson in the conclusion of his xiith Lecture, make it not improbable that Abel might have some perception of the significance of offering animals, whose skins were appointed to cover the bodily nakedness of fallen man, as an expression of gratitude for the effectual covering to be provided, through Christ, for their moral nakedness. To perceive this, however, he must have had a farther insight into the plan of redemption than he could obtain by his own reason alone, from the terms of the promise, as recorded in Genesis, iii. 15. But the same Spirit who suggested the propriety of the offering, could likewise so far enlighten his understanding, as to enable him to see its suitableness in this point of view, and, perhaps, to perceive some faint resemblance between the slaying of a victim and the bruising of the Deliverer's heel.

- (o) P. 65.—*All the details, the express revelation of which would have imposed an unnecessary and dangerous burden on the frailty of human faith.*

Had the circumstances of Christ's history been predicted by the Prophets, with the same distinctness and fulness with which they are recorded by the Evangelists, it would have required a greater degree of faith than has ever yet been required of Man, for those who preceded the accomplishment to believe them all : whereas those who were eye-witnesses of the facts, or who have such demonstrative evidence as we possess, that they have actu-

ally taken place, cannot disbelieve them without doing violence to common sense. To us an exact knowledge of particular facts, so far from overcharging, supports our faith ; for every circumstance recorded of Christ adds, either as a fulfilment of prophecy or an evidence of Divine Power, or Wisdom, or Goodness, to the accumulated proofs of his Divine Mission, on the truth of which every article of our faith depends ; but to those who lived before his coming, the prediction of such circumstances, so far from tending to add credibility to the simple declaration, that the Messiah should be sent from God, would manifestly have produced the very contrary effect.

(P) P. 79.—“*Repent and be baptised every one of you IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST.*”

In Acts, xiv. 20, 21, we read that Paul “departed with Barnabas to Derbe : and when they had *preached the Gospel to THAT CITY* and *had taught MANY*, they returned, &c.” Here an obvious distinction is made between *preaching the Gospel* and *teaching*. They are said to have taught *many*, in a manner which obviously implies, that they did not teach *all* in that city, to whom they preached the Gospel. Those only who profited by their preaching, and consequently embraced the Christian Religion, are here said to *have been taught* by the two Apostles. The distinction is intelligible even as it is expressed in the English Bible ; but it is much clearer in the original, where the word answering to *taught* has indeed all the meanings of the English verb *teach*, but would be more literally rendered (as it is in the margin)

of the very useful Edinburgh 8vo Bible,<sup>8)</sup> by *made disciples*. The true meaning and most literal translation of Acts, xiv. 21, therefore is, “ And when they had preached the Gospel to that city, and made many Disciples, they returned, &c.”

The same verb, which signifies *to teach*, but more literally *to make disciples*, is used in Matt. xxviii. 19; and is different from the verb used in the next verse, which could only be adequately rendered, as it there is, by the word *teaching*. The most close and expressive translation of Matt. xxviii. 19, 20, is, therefore, that supplied by the Scotch Margin Bible, “ Go ye and (*μαθητευοτε*) make Disciples (or Christians) of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; (*διδασκοντες*) teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.”

*In pursuance of these instructions*, St. Peter tells those who were pricked to the heart at his preaching on the great day of Pentecost, that they must “ repent and be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ;” and in two of the places where the same expression occurs, viz. Acts, viii. 16, and xix. 5, it might be rendered, “ baptised into the name of the Lord Jesus.” Hence it appears, that *to be baptised in the name of Christ*, is *to be made his Disciples*, *to assume the name*, *enter into the engagements*, and *obtain admission to the privileges of Christ's followers*, *by his appointed ordinance of Baptism*, ADMINISTERED IN THE FORM PRESCRIBED BY HIMSELF, in Matt. xxviii. 19.

This interpretation of the phrase, *baptised in the name of Jesus Christ*, is confirmed by 1 Cor. i. 12, 13; where St.

<sup>8</sup> Vulgarly known in Scotland by the name of the MARGIN BIBLE.

Paul reproves the Corinthians for saying, “ I am of Paul,” &c., by asking, “ Were ye baptised in the name of Paul?” Did ye in baptism profess yourselves disciples, followers, or servants of Paul? It is farther confirmed, by Acts, xxii. 16, where the more usual expression, *baptised in the name of the Lord*, is replaced by the equivalent expression, *baptised, calling on the name of the Lord*: for to call on the name of the Lord, means, in Acts, ii. 21, sincerely to profess, and in Acts, ix. 14, openly to profess the Christian Religion, which includes the worshipping of Christ, or calling upon his name in prayer.

(q) P. 81.—“ *Unto what then were ye baptised?*”

This is an incidental confirmation of the fact of baptism having been administered in the apostolic age exactly according to the form prescribed by our Lord in Matt. xxviii. 19. St. Paul manifestly took it for granted that these disciples had received Christian Baptism, which they might have done without having received those sensible gifts of the Holy Ghost which were wont to be conferred after baptism, by the imposition of the Apostles’ hands. But when they said that they had not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost, he immediately saw that they could not have received Christian Baptism; for if they had, they must at least have heard that there was a Holy Ghost, that baptism being administered in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

(R) P. 82.—*The circumstances of the Conversion of St. Paul, as stated in the ninth and twenty-second chapters of the Acts of the Apostles.*

One of the most daring of the modern blasphemers of God's word, in a publication entitled, NOT PAUL, BUT JESUS ; the avowed object of which is to destroy the authority of the great Apostle to the Gentiles, by representing him as an IMPOSTOR, and, consequently, the accounts of his conversion as deliberate falsehoods ; pretends to have discovered various disagreements in those accounts as given in Acts, ix. xxii. and xxvi. The most plausible of the instances he points out, and the most likely to effect his diabolical purpose of perplexing the minds and unsettling the faith of unlearned men, is the apparent contradiction between Acts, ix. 7, and xxii. 9.

“ And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, HEARING A VOICE, but seeing no man.”—Acts, ix. 7.

“ And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid ; but THEY HEARD NOT THE VOICE OF HIM THAT SPOKE TO ME.” Acts, xxii. 9.

Now, to grant the ADVERSARY all that he can possibly demand in this argument, I will admit that these two verses do contradict each other, IF there be no sense in which the same voice can be *truly* said to be heard, and yet not heard by the same persons at the same time. But that there is some such sense, familiar to the writers of the New Testament, is evident from Matt. xiii. 13. “ They seeing, see not; and HEARING, THEY HEAR NOT, neither do they understand.” No one has any difficulty

in giving to this verse a perfectly consistent meaning, viz. that though they see and hear, they are no wiser or better for either ; their outward senses are affected, but no impression is made upon their minds, which remain exactly in the same state as if they had neither seen nor heard.

A person addressed in an unknown tongue, or in his own language by one whose articulation is indistinct and unintelligible, or a person whose hearing is imperfect, or who, from any other cause, does not make out the meaning of what is said, though he hears the sound of the voice, may very truly, and properly say, *I do not hear,—or I hear, but do not hear what is said.* And, with exactly the same propriety, it may be said of them who journeyed with St. Paul, that *hearing the voice, they still did not hear the voice of him that spake.* Had the two accounts been compressed into one, and thus expressed, every person would have understood its meaning as readily as that of “hearing, they hear not,” in Matt. xiii. 13, or of Dryden’s “And sure he heard me, but he would not hear.”

The consistency of the two accounts is, however, much more apparent in the original language, *ἀκούοντες της φωνῆς . . . την φωνὴν δικτυοῦσας*; for the verb *ἀκούω*, governing, as in the first place, a genitive case, merely implies that the sense of hearing *is acted upon by* the voice ; but the same verb governing, as in the second place, an accusative case, implies something in the person that *acts upon* the voice, viz. the understanding. If farther proof be required that this verb does sometimes signify *to understand*, as well as simply to hear, turn to 1 Cor. xiv. 2, where it is translated, and properly

translated, *understand*—*διδεις γαρ ἀκοει*, “for no man understandeth,” literally “heareth,” as in the margin.

The expression, “stood speechless,” in Acts, ix. 7, does not imply that they stood upon their feet; but simply expresses how they *stood affected*, or *were affected* by what they saw, viz. with speechless terror. Nothing is more familiar than the use of the verb *to stand* in English, (as of *stare* in Italian,) to express, somewhat more emphatically, the meaning of the verb *to be*, generally with an idea of continuing; thus, *to stand in need*, *to stand reproved*. “Why stand we in jeopardy?” 1 Cor. xv. 30.—“I stand resigned.”—Dryden.—“And the world’s victor stood subdued by sound.”—Pope.

See Johnson’s Dictionary, fifteenth meaning of the verb *stand*.

“The men stood speechless;” therefore, in Acts, ix. 7, means simply that they *were, or remained speechless*, and is no way inconsistent with Acts, xxvi. 14, where it is said that they *all* fell to the ground. The Greek verb *ιστημι*, used in Acts, ix. 7, has a similar meaning in John, viii. 44,—Rom. v. 2,—Col. iv. 12. & *passim*.

Without accusing the *soi-disant* Gamaliel Smith, Esq.\*

\* We are told that *Jeremy* Bentham is the cowardly assassin who *sneaks* under this assumed name. If so, he cannot get off on the plea of ignorance; for Bentham is certainly a man of some learning. His taste and judgment are more questionable. Of the former he has erected a lasting monument in his invention of that portentous compound CHURCH-OF-ENGLANDISM; and of the latter, in his proposal to conduct the worship of Almighty God by the ministry of READING-BOYS, to be flogged, I suppose, round the congregation, whenever they miscalled a word, or stumbled at a proper name in the Old Testament. I am happy to say, that I am pure from the knowledge of any thing more of his writings than what I have seen at different times in Reviews. All I know

of much learning or judgment, it is impossible to give him credit for so much ignorance as not to have been aware of the above obvious modes of removing all apparent contradiction in the two instances referred to. At the same time, therefore, that he produced them as proofs of falsehood, he must, I fear, have been conscious, that they are strong marks of truth in the Scripture accounts of St. Paul's conversion ; for they shew that absence of study, that straight-forward indifference about words and phrases, which nothing but truth can give. It is painful to be compelled to make an observation which savours so much of uncharitable judging ; but when the fiendish design of *uttering* every insinuation, however destitute of truth, that may chance to unsettle the faith of a single weak brother, is so apparent, as it is in this and other writers of the Satanic School, BROTHERLY KINDNESS AND CHARITY command us to hold them up in their true characters, as dishonest, deceitful, dangerous men, designing "madmen, who cast about firebrands, arrows, and death,"<sup>1</sup> in the desperate hope that some of them may take effect to the destruction of an unwary soul. Let every one who values his eternal peace beware of such writers as this. Trust not yourselves to read their blasphemies and impurities ; for as

— "There are sins

Whose very dread infects the virgin's soul,  
Tainting the fountain of her secret thoughts ;"

so are there sentiments, whose revolting impiety corrupts the sources of our devotions, by being associated in our memory with things the most sacred. If this ef-

of NOT PAUL, BUT JESUS, is from the extracts in the CAMBRIDGE QUARTERLY, NO. II.

<sup>1</sup> Prov. xxvi. 18.

fect of association were duly considered by writers of a totally different description, we should less frequently have the pain of seeing religious subjects placed in a ludicrous point of view.

(s) P. 97.—*And then it was, that, as we read in the Acts, he was certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus, &c.*

The apparent inconsistency between Acts, ix. 19—26, and Gal. i. 16—18, though noticed and explained by the earliest Christian writers, is nevertheless continually produced by modern Socinians and Deists as a new discovery, in hopes of triumphing thereby over the faith of some who neither know how to reconcile the apparent inconsistency themselves, nor how it has been done by others. St. Paul's going into Arabia (Gal. i. 17) is not at all noticed in the Acts. I conceive its place in the ixth chapter of that Treatise to be in the middle of the 19th verse of our modern arbitrary, and sometimes injudicious division: because, if St. Paul had been certain days with the disciples at Damascus, *immediately after his baptism*, he could not have said, Gal. i. 16, 17, “IMMEDIATELY I conferred not with flesh and blood, neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were Apostles before me; but I WENT INTO ARABIA, and returned again to Damascus:” and because the Greek particle δέ, here translated *then*, cannot mean *then* for *at that time*, but *then* for *afterwards*, or *afterwards therefore*. I am inclined to think it there signifies *afterwards therefore*, pointing back to the preceding part of the narrative as

the reason why St. Paul "returned to Damascus," and there began to preach that Christ is the Son of God.

Nothing is more familiar to those who have studied the New Testament with attention, than the inartificial manner in which each writer has stated the facts that were impressed upon his mind as important to be recorded, without noticing connecting facts or circumstances. This omission of intervening circumstances necessarily gives to events, that stand next to each other in the narrative, the appearance of having happened in close succession, though there may have been, in reality, a considerable time between them. Let any one read a portion of the History of England in Goldsmith's abridgement, and then read the corresponding portion in Hume, and he will see that this is the necessary effect of abridging to the extent that we know, from John, xx. 30, and xxi. 25, that the Evangelists did.

It will be sufficient to quote one decisive instance, exactly similar to that before us, and from the same inspired penman, St. Luke. Having related our Lord's appearance to his Apostles on the first evening after his resurrection ; immediately after His address to them on that occasion, the Evangelist adds, " And he led them out as far as Bethany ; and he lifted up his hands and blessed them. And it came to pass, that while he blessed them, he was parted from them and carried up into heaven." Had this been the only account transmitted to us, the universal impression would have been, that Jesus appeared only once to his Apostles after his resurrection, and closed that interview, by leading them out as far as Bethany, and there ascending into heaven ; whereas, the very same writer has told us, that he was seen by the Apostles after his passion, during forty days. There is

therefore, between verses 49 and 50 of Luke, xxiv., an omission of forty days, exactly similar to the omission of at least two years between the first and second clauses of Acts, ix. 19. And the similarity is more complete in the original ; for it is the same Greek particle δέ, which in Luke, xxiv. 50, is rendered “And,” and in Acts, ix. 19, “Then.” In both places, that particle means either *Moreover*, *Again*, implying simply that what follows is an additional circumstance which the writer saw occasion to mention ; or *Afterwards*, implying that it is subsequent in point of time, but leaving it quite indeterminate by how long.

(r) P. 101.—*In exact conformity with the standards of the Church of England.*

“What is the inward or spiritual grace” in **BAPTISM**?

“A death unto sin, and a **NEW BIRTH** unto righteousness ; for, being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace.”—**CATECHISM**.

“**BAPTISM** is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christian men are discerned from others that are not christened ; but it is also a sign of **REGENERATION**, or **NEW BIRTH**, whereby, as by an instrument, they that receive baptism rightly, are grafted into the Church.”—**XXVIITH ARTICLE**.

“Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that this child is **REGENERATE**, and grafted into the body of Christ’s Church.”

“We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee **TO REGENERATE** this infant

with thy Holy Spirit."—*Office of BAPTISM FOR INFANTS.*

" We yield thee humble thanks, O heavenly Father, that thou hast vouchsafed to call us to the knowledge of thy grace, and faith in thee. Increase this knowledge, and confirm this faith in us evermore. Give thy Holy Spirit to these persons ; that, BEING NOW BORN AGAIN, and made heirs of everlasting salvation, through our Lord Jesus Christ, they may continue thy servants and attain thy promises, through the same Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, everlastingly." AMEN.—*Office of BAPTISM FOR SUCH AS ARE OF RIPER YEARS.*

FINIS.









